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THE

WORKS

OF

WILLIAM ROBERTSON, D.D.

VOL. XII.

Strahan and Preston,
Printers-Street, London.

THE

WORKS

OF

WILLIAM ROBERTSON, D.D.

FELLOW OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY, AND PRINCIPAL
OF THE UNIVERSITY, OF EDINBURGH,
HISTORIOGRAPHER TO HIS MAJESTY FOR SCOTLAND,
AND
MEMBER OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF HISTORY
AT MADRID.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

AN ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE AND WRITINGS,

BY DUGALD STEWART, F.R.S. EDIN.

IN TWELVE VOLUMES.

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AN

HISTORICAL

DISQUISITION

CONCERNING

THE KNOWLEDGE WHICH THE ANCIENTS HAD OF

INDIA;

AND THE

PROGRESS OF TRADE WITH THAT COUNTRY
PRIOR TO THE DISCOVERY OF THE PASSAGE TO IT BY
THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.

With an APPENDIX,

CONTAINING

OBSERVATIONS ON THE CIVIL POLITY—THE LAWS AND JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS—THE ARTS AND SCIENCES—AND RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS, OF THE *INDIANS.*

PREFACE

TO

THE DISQUISITION CONCERNING ANCIENT INDIA.

THE perusal of Major Rennell's Memoir for illustrating his Map of Indostan, one of the most valuable geographical treatises that has appeared in any age or country, gave rise to the following work. It suggested to me the idea of examining more fully than I had done in the Introductory Book to my History of America, into the knowledge which the Ancients had of India, and of considering what is certain, what is obscure, and what is fabulous, in the accounts of that country which they have handed down to us. In undertaking this inquiry, I had originally no other object than my own amusement and instruction: But in carrying it on, and consulting with diligence the authors of antiquity, some facts, hitherto unobserved, and many which had not been examined with proper attention, occurred; new views opened; my ideas gradually extended and became more interesting; until, at length, I imagined that the result of my researches might prove amusing and instructive to others, by exhibiting such a view of the various modes in which intercourse with India had been carried on from the earliest times, as

might ſhew how much that great branch of commerce has contributed, in every age, to increaſe the wealth and power of the nations which poſſeſſed it.

THUS the Hiſtorical Diſquiſition which I now lay before the Reader was begun and completed. What degree of merit it poſſesses, the Public muſt determine. My grateful recollection of the favourable manner in which my other works have been received, naturally increaſes the ſolicitude with which I wait for its deciſion concerning this which I now publiſh.

WHEN I firſt turned my thoughts to this ſubject, I was ſo fully aware of the diſadvantage under which I laboured in undertaking to deſcribe countries of which I had not any local knowledge, that I have been at the utmoſt pains to guard againſt any errors which this might occaſion. I have conſulted, with perſevering induſtry, the works of all the authors I could procure, who have given any account of India; I have never formed any decided opinion, which was not ſupported by reſpectable authority; and as I have the good fortune to reckon among the number of my friends ſome Gentlemen who have filled important ſtations, civil and military, in India, and who have viſited many different parts of it, I had recourſe frequently to them, and from their converſation learned things which I could not have found in books. Were

it proper to mention their names, the Public would allow that, by their diſcernment and abilities, they are fully entitled to the confidence which I have placed in them.

In the progreſs of the work, I became ſenſible of my own deficiency with reſpect to another point. In order to give an accurate idea of the imperfection both of the theory and practice of navigation among the Ancients, and to explain, with ſcientific preciſion, the manner in which they aſcertained the poſition of places, and calculated their longitude and latitude, a greater portion of mathematical knowledge was requiſite, than my attention to other ſtudies had permitted me to acquire. What I wanted, the friendſhip of my ingenious and reſpectable Colleague, Mr. Playfair, Profeſſor of Mathematics, has ſupplied; and I have been enabled by him to elucidate all the points I have mentioned, in a manner which, I am confident, will afford my readers complete ſatisfaction. To him, likewiſe, I am indebted for the conſtruction of two maps neceſſary for illuſtrating this Diſquiſition, which without his aſſiſtance I could not have undertaken.

I have adhered, in this work, to an arrangement I followed in my former compoſitions, and to which the public has been long accuſtomed. I have kept hiſtorical narrative as much ſeparate as poſſible from ſcientific and critical diſcuſſions,

by reſerving the latter for Notes and Illuſtrations. I flatter myſelf that I may claim, without preſumption, the merit of having examined with diligence what I ſubmit to public inſpection, and of having referred, with ſcrupulous accuracy, to the authors from whom I have derived information.

College of Edinburgh,
May 10th, 1791.

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AN

HISTORICAL DISQUISITION

CONCERNING

ANCIENT INDIA.

SECTION I.

Intercourſe with India, from the earlieſt Times until the Conqueſt of Egypt by the Romans.

SECT. I.

WHOEVER attempts to trace the operations of men in remote times, and to mark the various ſteps of their progreſs in any line of exertion, will ſoon have the mortification to find, that the period of authentic hiſtory is extremely limited. It is little more than three thouſand years ſince the Books of Moſes, the moſt ancient and only genuine record of what paſſed in the early ages of the world, were compoſed. Herodotus, the moſt ancient Heathen hiſtorian whoſe works have reached us, flouriſhed a thouſand years later. If we puſh our inquiries concerning any point beyond the æra where written hiſtory commences, we enter upon the region of conjecture, of fable, and of uncertainty. Upon that ground I will neither venture myſelf, nor endea-

SECT. I.

vour to conduct my readers. In my researches concerning the intercourse between the Eastern and Western regions of the earth, and concerning the progress of that great branch of trade, which, in every age, has contributed so conspicuously towards raising the people who carried it on, to wealth and power, I shall confine myself within the precincts I have marked out. Whereever the inspired writers, intent upon higher objects, mention occasionally any circumstance that tends to illustrate the subject of my inquiries, I shall attend to it with reverence. Whatever other writers relate, I shall examine with freedom, and endeavour to ascertain the degree of credit to which they are entitled.

THE original station allotted to man by his Creator, was in the mild and fertile regions of the East. There the human race began its career of improvement; and from the remains of sciences which were anciently cultivated, as well as of arts which were anciently exercised in India, we may conclude it to be one of the first countries in which men made any considerable progress in that career. The wisdom of the East was early celebrated [a], and its productions were early in request among distant nations [b]. The intercourse, however, between different countries was carried on at first entirely by land. As the people of the East appear soon to have acquired complete dominion over the useful animals [c], they

[a] 1 Kings, iv. 30.
[b] Gen. xxxvii. 25.
[c] Gen. xii. 16. xxiv. 10, 11.

cou-

ould early undertake the long and toilſome ›urnies which it was neceſſary to make, in order o maintain this intercourſe; and by the provi- ent bounty of Heaven, they were furniſhed vith a beaſt of burden, without whoſe aid it vould have been impoſſible to accompliſh them. The camel, by its perſevering ſtrength, by its noderation in the uſe of food, and the ſingula- rity of its internal ſtructure, which enables it to lay in a ſtock of water ſufficient for ſeveral days, put it in their power to convey bulky commodi- ties through thoſe deſerts, which muſt be tra- verſed by all who travel from any of the countries weſt of the Euphrates towards India. Trade was carried on in this manner, particularly by the nations near to the Arabian Gulf, from the earlieſt period to which hiſtorical information reaches. Diſtant journies, however, would be undertaken at firſt only occaſionally, and by a few adventurers. But by degrees, from atten- tion to their mutual ſafety and comfort, nume- rous bodies of merchants aſſembled at ſtated times, and forming a temporary aſſociation, (known afterwards by the name of a Caravan,) governed by officers of their own choice, and ſubject to regulations of which experience had taught them the utility, they performed journies of ſuch extent and duration, as appear aſtoniſh- ing to nations not accuſtomed to this mode of carrying on commerce.

But, notwithſtanding every improvement that could be made in the manner of conveying the

SECT. I. productions of one country to another by land, the inconveniencies which attended it were obvious and unavoidable. It was often dangerous; always expenſive, and tedious, and fatiguing. A method of communication more eaſy and expeditious was ſought, and the ingenuity of man gradually diſcovered, that the rivers, the arms of the ſea, and even the ocean itſelf, were deſtined to open and facilitate intercourſe with the various regions of the earth, between which they appear, at firſt view, to be placed as inſuperable barriers. Navigation, however, and ſhip-building, (as I have obſerved in another work[d],) are arts ſo nice and complicated, that they require the talents as well as experience of many ſucceſſive ages, to bring them to any degree of perfection. From the raft or canoe, which firſt ſerved to carry a ſavage over the river that obſtructed him in the chace, to the conſtruction of a veſſel capable of conveying a numerous crew, or a conſiderable cargo of goods, to a diſtant coaſt, the progreſs of improvement is immenſe. Many efforts would be made, many experiments would be tried, and much labour as well as ingenuity would be employed, before this arduous and important undertaking could be accompliſhed.

Even after ſome improvement was made in ſhip-building, the intercourſe of nations with each other by ſea was far from being extenſive. From the accounts of the earlieſt hiſtorians, we learn, that

[d] Hiſt. of America, vol. i. p. 2.

navi-

navigation made its first efforts in the Mediterranean and the Arabian Gulf, and in them the first active operations of commerce were carried on. From an attentive inspection of the position and form of these two great inland seas, these accounts appear to be highly probable. These seas lay open the continents of Europe, Asia, and Africa, and spreading to a great extent along the coasts of the most fertile and most early civilized countries in each, seem to have been destined by nature to facilitate their communication with one another. We find, accordingly, that the first voyages of the Egyptians and Phenicians, the most ancient navigators mentioned in history, were made in the Mediterranean. Their trade, however, was not long confined to the countries bordering upon it. By acquiring early possession of ports on the Arabian Gulf, they extended the sphere of their commerce, and are represented as the first people of the West who opened a communication by sea with India.

In that account of the progress of navigation and discovery which I prefixed to the history of America, I considered with attention the maritime operations of the Egyptians and Phenicians; a brief review of them here, as far as they relate to their connection with India, is all that is requisite for illustrating the subject of my present inquiries. With respect to the former of these people, the information which history affords is slender, and of doubtful authority. The

SECT. I. fertile ſoil and mild climate of Egypt produced the neceſſaries and comforts of life in ſuch profuſion, as to render its inhabitants ſo independent of other countries, that it became early an eſtabliſhed maxim in their policy, to renounce all intercourſe with foreigners. In conſequence of this, they held all ſea-faring perſons in deteſtation, as impious and profane; and fortifying their harbours, they denied ſtrangers admiſſion into them[e].

THE enterpriſing ambition of Seſoſtris, diſdaining the reſtraints impoſed upon it by theſe contracted ideas of his ſubjects, prompted him to render the Egyptians a commercial people; and in the courſe of his reign he ſo completely accompliſhed this, that (if we may give credit to ſome hiſtorians) he was able to fit out a fleet of four hundred ſhips in the Arabian Gulf, which conquered all the countries ſtretching along the Erythrean ſea to India. At the ſame time his army, led by himſelf, marched through Aſia, and ſubjected to his dominion every part of it as far as to the banks of the Ganges; and croſſing that river, advanced to the Eaſtern Ocean[f]. But theſe efforts produced no permanent effect, and appear to have been ſo contrary to the genius and habits of the Egyptians, that, on the death of Seſoſtris, they reſumed their ancient maxims, and many ages elapſed before the commercial

[e] Diodor. Sicul. lib. i. p. 78. edit. Weſſelingi, Amſt. 1746. Strab. Geog. lib. xvii. p. 1142. A. edit. Caſaub. Amſt. 1707.

[f] Diod. Sic. lib. i. p. 64.

con-

connection of Egypt with India came to be of such importance as to merit any notice in this disquisition[5]. SECT. I.

THE history of the early maritime operations of Phenicia is not involved in the same obscurity with those of Egypt. Every circumstance in the character and situation of the Phenicians was favourable to the commercial spirit. The territory which they possessed was neither large nor fertile. It was from commerce only that they could derive either opulence or power. Accordingly, the trade carried on by the Phenicians of Sidon and Tyre, was extensive and adventurous; and, both in their manners and policy, they resemble the great commercial states of modern times, more than any people in the ancient world. Among the various branches of their commerce, that with India may be regarded as one of the most considerable and most lucrative. As by their situation on the Mediterranean, and the imperfect state of navigation, they could not attempt to open a direct communication with India by sea; the enterprizing spirit of commerce prompted them to wrest from the Idumæans some commodious harbours towards the bottom of the Arabian Gulf. From these they held a regular intercourse with India on the one hand, and with the eastern and southern coasts of Africa on the other. The distance, however, from the Arabian Gulf to Tyre, was consider-

[5] See NOTE I. at the end of the Volume.

SECT. I. able, and rendered the conveyance of goods to it by land carriage so tedious and expensive, that it became necessary for them to take possession of Rhinocolura, the nearest port in the Mediterranean to the Arabian Gulf. Thither all the commodities brought from India were conveyed over land by a route much shorter, and more practicable, than that by which the productions of the East were carried at a subsequent period from the opposite shore of the Arabian Gulf to the Nile[h]. At Rhinocolura they were re-shipped, and transported by an easy navigation to Tyre, and distributed through the world. This, as it is the earliest route of communication with India of which we have any authentic description, had so many advantages over any ever known before the modern discovery of a new course of navigation to the East, that the Phenicians could supply other nations with the productions of India in greater abundance, and at a cheaper rate, than any people of antiquity. To this circumstance, which, for a considerable time, secured to them a monopoly of that trade, was owing, not only the extraordinary wealth of individuals, which rendered the "merchants of Tyre, Princes, and her traffickers the Honourable of the Earth[i];" but the extensive power of the state itself, which first taught mankind to conceive what vast resources a commercial people possess, and what great exertions they are capable of making[k].

[h] Diod. Sic. lib. i. p. 70. Strab. lib. xvi. p. 1128. A.

[i] Isaiah, xxiii. 8.

[k] See NOTE II.

THE

THE Jews, by their vicinity to Tyre, had such an opportunity of observing the wealth which flowed into that city from the lucrative commerce carried on by the Phenicians from their settlements on the Arabian Gulf, as incited them to aim at obtaining some share of it. This they effected under the prosperous reigns of David and Solomon, partly by the conquests which they made of a small district in the land of Edom, that gave them possession of the harbours of Elath and Esiongeber on the Red Sea, and partly by the friendship of Hiram, King of Tyre; who enabled Solomon to fit out fleets, which, under the direction of Phenician pilots, sailed to Tarshish and Ophir[l]. In what region of the earth we should search for these famous ports which furnished the navy of Solomon with the various commodities enumerated by the sacred historians, is an inquiry that has long exercised the industry of learned men. They were early supposed to be situated in some part of India, and the Jews were held to be one of the nations which traded with that country. But the opinion more generally adopted is, that Solomon's fleets, after passing the straits of Babelmandeb, held their course along the south-west coast of Africa, as far as the kingdom of Sofala, a country celebrated for its rich mines of gold and silver, (from which it has been denominated the Golden Sofala, by oriental writers[m],) and abounding in all

[l] Kings, ix. 26. x. 22.

[m] Notices des MSS. du Roi, tom. ii. p. 40.

the

SECT. I. the other articles which compoſed the cargoes of the Jewiſh ſhips. This opinion, which the accurate reſearches of M. D'Anville rendered highly probable[n], ſeems now to be eſtabliſhed with the utmoſt certainty by a late learned traveller; who by his knowledge of the monſoons in the Arabian Gulf, and his attention to the ancient mode of navigation, both in that ſea and along the African coaſt, has not only accounted for the extraordinary length of time which the fleets of Solomon took in going and returning, but has ſhewn, from circumſtances mentioned concerning the voyage, that it was not made to any place in India[o]. The Jews, then, we may conclude, have no title to be reckoned among the nations which carried on intercourſe with India by ſea; and if, from deference to the ſentiments of ſome reſpectable authors, their claim were to be admitted, we know with certainty, that the commercial effort which they made in the reign of Solomon was merely a tranſient one, and that they quickly returned to their former ſtate of unſocial ſecluſion from the reſt of mankind.

From collecting the ſcanty information which hiſtory affords, concerning the moſt early attempts to open a commercial intercourſe with India, I now proceed with more certainty and

[n] Differt. ſur le Pays d'Ophir, Mem. de Literat. tom. xxx. p. 83, &c.

[o] Bruce's Travels, book ii. ch. 4.

greater

greater confidence, to trace the progreſs of communication with that country, under the guidance of authors who recorded events nearer to their own times, and with reſpect to which they had received more full and accurate intelligence.

The firſt eſtabliſhment of any foreign power in India which can be aſcertained by evidence meriting any degree of credit, is that of the Perſians; and even of this we have only a very general and doubtful account. Darius, the ſon of Hyſtaſpes, though raiſed to the throne of Perſia by chance or by artifice, poſſeſſed ſuch active and enterprizing talents, as rendered him worthy of that high ſtation. He examined the different provinces of his kingdom more diligently than any of his predeceſſors, and explored regions of Aſia formerly little known[p]. Having ſubjected to his dominion many of the countries which ſtretched ſouth-eaſt from the Caſpian ſea towards the river Oxus, his curioſity was excited to acquire a more extenſive and accurate knowledge of India, on which they bordered. With this view he appointed Scylax of Caryandra to take the command of a ſquadron fitted out at Caſpatyrus, in the country of Pactya, [the modern Pehkely,] towards the upper part of the navigable courſe of the river Indus, and to fall down its ſtream until he ſhould reach the ocean. This Scylax performed, though it ſhould ſeem with much difficulty, and notwithſtanding many obſtacles; for

[p] Herodot. lib. iv. c. 44.

he

SECT. I.

he ſpent no leſs than two years and ſix months in conducting his ſquadron from the place where he embarked, to the Arabian Gulf[q]. The account which he gave of the populouſneſs, fertility, and high cultivation of that region of India through which his courſe lay, rendered Darius impatient to become maſter of a country ſo valuable. This he ſoon accompliſhed; and though his conqueſts in India ſeem not to have extended beyond the diſtrict watered by the Indus, we are led to form an high idea of its opulence, as well as of the number of its inhabitants, in ancient times, when we learn that the tribute which he levied from it was near a third part of the whole revenue of the Perſian monarchy[r]. But neither this voyage of Scylax, nor the conqueſts of Darius, to which it gave riſe, diffuſed any general knowledge of India. The Greeks, who were the only enlightened race of men at that time in Europe, paid but little attention to the tranſactions of the people whom they conſidered as Barbarians, eſpecially in countries far remote from their own; and Scylax had embelliſhed the narrative of his voyage with ſo many circumſtances manifeſtly fabulous[s], that he ſeems to have met with the juſt puniſhment to which perſons who have a notorious propenſity to what is marvellous are often ſubjected, of being liſtened to with diſtruſt, even when they relate what is exactly true.

[q] Herodot. lib. iv. c. 42. 44.

[r] Id. lib. iii. c. 90—96. See NOTE III.

[s] Philoſtr. Vita Apoll. lib. iii. c. 47., and Note 3d of Olearius Tzetzet. Chiliad. vii. verſ. 630.

ABOUT

SECT. I.

About an hundred and ſixty years after the reign of Darius Hyſtaſpes, Alexander the Great undertook his expedition into India. The wild ſallies of paſſion, the indecent exceſſes of intemperance, and the oſtentatious diſplays of vanity too frequent in the conduct of this extraordinary man, have ſo degraded his character, that the pre-eminence of his merit, either as a conqueror, a politician, or a legiſlator, has ſeldom been juſtly eſtimated. The ſubject of my preſent inquiry leads me to conſider his operations only in one light, but it will enable me to exhibit a ſtriking view of the grandeur and extent of his plans. He ſeems, ſoon after his firſt ſucceſſes in Aſia, to have formed the idea of eſtabliſhing an univerſal monarchy, and aſpired to the dominion of the ſea, as well as of the land. From the wonderful efforts of the Tyrians in their own defence, when left without any ally or protector, he conceived an high opinion of the reſources of maritime power, and of the wealth to be derived from commerce, eſpecially that with India, which he found engroſſed by the citizens of Tyre. With a view to ſecure this commerce, and to eſtabliſh a ſtation for it, preferable in many reſpects to that of Tyre, as ſoon as he completed the conqueſt of Egypt, he founded a city near one of the mouths of the Nile, which he honoured with his own name; and with ſuch admirable diſcernment was the ſituation of it choſen, that Alexandria ſoon became the greateſt trading city in the ancient world; and, notwithſtanding many ſucceſſive revolutions in empire, continued during eighteen centuries,

SECT. I. centuries, to be the chief ſeat of commerce with India[t]. Amidſt the military operations to which Alexander was ſoon obliged to turn his attention, the deſire of acquiring the lucrative commerce which the Tyrians had carried on with India, was not relinquiſhed. Events ſoon occurred, that not only confirmed and added ſtrength to this deſire, but opened to him a proſpect of obtaining the ſovereignty of thoſe regions which ſupplied the reſt of mankind with ſo many precious commodities.

After his final victory over the Perſians, he was led in purſuit of the laſt Darius, and of Beſſus, the murderer of that unfortunate monarch, to traverſe that part of Aſia which ſtretches from the Caſpian ſea beyond the river Oxus. He advanced towards the eaſt as far as Maracanda[u], then a city of ſome note, and deſtined in a future period, under the modern name of Samarcand, to be the capital of an empire not inferior to his own either in extent or in power. In a progreſs of ſeveral months through provinces hitherto unknown to the Greeks, in a line of march often approaching near to India, and among people accuſtomed to much intercourſe with it, he learned many things concerning the ſtate of a country[x] that had been long the object of his thoughts and wiſhes[y], which increaſed his deſire of invading it. Deciſive and prompt in all his reſolutions, he ſet out from Bactria, and croſſed

[t] Hiſt. of America, vol. i. p. 20.
[u] Arrian, iii. c. 30.
[x] Strabo, xv. p. 1021. A.
[y] Arrian, iv. c. 15.

that ridge of mountains which, under various denominations, forms the Stony Girdle (if I may use an expression of the Oriental geographers) which encircles Asia, and constitutes the northern barrier of India.

SECT. I.

THE most practicable avenue to every country, it is obvious, must be formed by circumstances in its natural situation, such as the defiles which lead through mountains, the course of rivers, and the places where they may be passed with the greatest ease and safety. In no place of the earth is this line of approach marked and defined more conspicuously, than on the northern frontier of India; insomuch that the three great invaders of this country, Alexander, Tamerlane, and Nadir Shah, in three distant ages, and with views and talents extremely different, advanced by the same route, with very little deviation. Alexander had the merit of having first discovered the way. After passing the mountains, he encamped at Alexandria Paropamisana, not far from the mountains denominated the Indian Caucasus by his historians, now known by the name of Hindoo Kho[z]; and having subdued or conciliated the nations seated on the north-west bank of the Indus, he crossed the river at Taxila, now Attock, where its stream is so tranquil that a bridge can be thrown over it with greater ease than at any other place[a].

[z] In the second edition of his Memoir, Major Rennell gives the modern names of the Hydaspes, with some variation in their orthography, *Behut* and *Ihylam*.

[a] Rennell, Mem. p. 92. See NOTE IV.

AFTER

SECT. I.

After paſſing the Indus, Alexander marched forward in the road which leads directly to the Ganges, and the opulent provinces to the ſouth-eaſt, now comprehended under the general name of Indoſtan. But, on the banks of the Hydaſpes, known in modern times by the name of the Betah or Chelum, he was oppoſed by Porus, a powerful monarch of the country, at the head of a numerous army. The war with Porus, and the hoſtilities in which he was ſucceſſively engaged with other Indian Princes, led him to deviate from his original route, and to turn more towards the ſouth-weſt. In carrying on theſe operations, Alexander marched through one of the richeſt and beſt peopled countries of India, now called the Panjab, from the five great rivers by which it is watered; and as we know that this march was performed in the rainy ſeaſon, when even Indian armies cannot keep the field, it gives an high idea both of Alexander's perſevering ſpirit, and of the extraordinary vigour and hardineſs of conſtitution, which ſoldiers, in ancient times, derived from the united effects of gymnaſtic exerciſe and military diſcipline. In every ſtep of his progreſs, objects no leſs ſtriking than new preſented themſelves to Alexander. The magnitude of the Indus, even after he had ſeen the Nile, the Euphrates, and the Tigris, muſt have filled him with ſurpriſe[b]. No country he had hitherto viſited, was ſo populous and well cultivated, or abounded in ſo many valuable productions of nature and of art, as that part of India

[b] Strabo, lib. xv. p. 1027. C. & note 5. Caſaub.

through which he had led his army. But when he was informed in every place, and probably with exaggerated deſcription, how much the Indus was inferior to the Ganges, and how far all that he had hitherto beheld was ſurpaſſed in the happy regions through which that great river flows, it is not wonderful that his eagerneſs to view and to take poſſeſſion of them ſhould have prompted him to aſſemble his ſoldiers, and to propoſe that they ſhould reſume their march towards that quarter where wealth, dominion, and fame awaited them. But they had already done ſo much, and had ſuffered ſo greatly, eſpecially from inceſſant rains and extenſive inundations, that their patience as well as ſtrength were exhauſted[c], and with one voice they refuſed to advance farther. In this reſolution they perſiſted with ſuch ſullen obſtinacy, that Alexander, though poſſeſſed in the higheſt degree of every quality that gains an aſcendant over the minds of military men, was obliged to yield, and to iſſue orders for marching back to Perſia[d].

The ſcene of this memorable tranſaction was on the banks of the Hyphaſis, the modern Beyah, which was the utmoſt limit of Alexander's progreſs in India. From this it is manifeſt, that he did not traverſe the whole extent of the Panjab. Its ſouth-weſt boundary is formed by a river anciently known by the name of Hyſudrus, and now by that of the Setlege, to which Alexander never approached nearer than the ſouthern bank

[c] See NOTE V.

[d] Arrian, v. c. 24, 25.

 of

SECT. I. of the Hyphasis, where he erected twelve stupendous altars, which he intended as a monument of his exploits, and which (if we may believe the biographer of Apollonius Tyanæus) were still remaining, with legible inscriptions, when that fantastic sophist visited India, three hundred and seventy-three years after Alexander's expedition[e]. The breadth of the Panjab, from Ludhana on the Setlege to Attock on the Indus, is computed to be two hundred and fifty-nine geographical miles, in a straight line; and Alexander's march, computed in the same manner, did not extend above two hundred miles. But, both as he advanced and returned, his troops were so spread over the country, and often acted in so many separate divisions, and all his movements were so exactly measured and delineated by men of science, whom he kept in pay for the purpose, that he acquired a very extensive and accurate knowledge of that part of India[f].

When, upon his return, he reached the banks of the Hydaspes, he found that the officers to whom he had given it in charge to build and collect as many vessels as possible, had executed his orders with such activity and success, that they had assembled a numerous fleet. As amidst the hurry of war, and the rage of conquest, he never lost sight of his pacific and commercial schemes, the destination of his fleet was to sail down the

[e] Philostr. Vita Apollon. lib. ii. c. 43. edit. Olear. Lipf. 1709.

[f] Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. vi. c. 17.

Indus

ndus to the ocean, and from its mouth to proceed to the Persian Gulf, that a communication by sea might be opened with India and the center of his dominions.

THE conduct of this expedition was committed to Nearchus, an officer equal to that important trust. But as Alexander was ambitious to acquire fame of every kind, and fond of engaging in new and splendid undertakings, he himself accompanied Nearchus in his navigation down the river. The armament was indeed so great and magnificent, as deserved to be commanded by the conqueror of Asia. It was composed of an army of a hundred and twenty thousand men, and two hundred elephants, and of a fleet of near two thousand vessels, various in burden and form[g]; on board of which one-third of the troops embarked, while the remainder marching in two divisions, one on the right, and the other on the left, of the river, accompanied them in their progress. As they advanced, the nations on each side were either compelled or persuaded to submit. Retarded by the various operations in which this engaged him, as well as by the slow navigation of such a fleet as he conducted, Alexander was above nine months before he reached the ocean[h].

ALEXANDER's progress in India, in this line of direction, was far more considerable than that which he made by the route we formerly traced; and when we attend to the various movements

[g] See NOTE VI. [h] Strabo, lib. xv. p. 1014.

SECT. I. of his troops, the number of cities which they took, and the different ſtates which they ſubdued, he may be ſaid not only to have viewed, but to have explored, the countries through which he paſſed. This part of India has been ſo little frequented by Europeans in later times, that neither the poſition of places, nor their diſtances, can be aſcertained with the ſame accuracy as in the interior provinces, or even in the Panjab. But from the reſearches of Major Rennell, carried on with no leſs diſcernment than induſtry, the diſtance of that place on the Hydaſpes, where Alexander fitted out his fleet from the ocean, cannot be leſs than a thouſand Britiſh miles. Of this extenſive region a conſiderable portion, particularly the upper Delta, ſtretching from the capital of the ancient Malli, now Moultan, to Patala, the modern Tatta, is diſtinguiſhed for its fertility and population[i].

Soon after he reached the ocean, Alexander, ſatisfied with having accompliſhed this arduous undertaking, led his army by land back to Perſia. The command of the fleet, with a conſiderable body of troops on board of it, he left to Nearchus, who, after a coaſting voyage of ſeven months, conducted it ſafely up the Perſian Gulf into the Euphrates[k].

In this manner did Alexander firſt open the knowledge of India to the people of Europe, and an ex-

[i] Rennell Mem. 68, &c.

[k] Plin. Nat. Hiſt. lib. vi. c. 23. See NOTE VII.

tenſive

tenſive diſtrict of it was ſurveyed with greater accuracy than could have been expected from the ſhort time he remained in that country. Fortunately an exact account, not only of his military operations, but of every thing worthy of notice in the countries where they were carried on, was recorded in the Memoirs or Journals of three of his principal officers, Ptolemy, the ſon of Lagus, Ariſtobulus, and Nearchus. The two former have not indeed reached our times, but it is probable that the moſt important facts which they contained are preſerved, as Arrian profeſſes to have followed them as his guides in his Hiſtory of the Expedition of Alexander[l]; a work which, though compoſed long after Greece had loſt its liberty, and in an age when genius and taſte were on the decline, is not unworthy the pureſt times of Attic literature.

With reſpect to the general ſtate of India, we learn from theſe writers, that in the age of Alexander, though there was not eſtabliſhed in it any powerful empire, reſembling that which in modern times ſtretched its dominion from the Indus almoſt to Cape Comorin, it was even then formed into monarchies of conſiderable extent. The King of the Praſij was prepared on the banks of the Ganges to oppoſe the Macedonians, with an army of twenty thouſand cavalry, two hundred thouſand infantry, two thouſand armed chariots, and a great number of elephants[m]. The territory

[l] Arrian, lib. i. in proëmio. [m] Diod. Sicul. lib. xvii. p. 232.

SECT. I.

of which Alexander conſtituted Porus the ſovereign, is ſaid to have contained ſeven diſtinct nations, and no fewer than two thouſand towns[n]. Even in the moſt reſtricted ſenſe that can be given to the vague indefinite appellations of *nations* and *towns*, an idea is conveyed of a very great degree of population. As the fleet ſailed down the river, the country on each ſide was found to be in no reſpect inferior to that of which the government was committed to Porus.

It was likewiſe from the Memoirs of the ſame officers that Europe derived its firſt authentic information concerning the climate, the ſoil, the productions, and the inhabitants of India; and in a country where the manners, the cuſtoms, and even the dreſs of the people are almoſt as permanent and invariable as the face of nature itſelf, it is wonderful how exactly the deſcriptions given by Alexander's officers delineate what we now behold in India, at the diſtance of two thouſand years. The ſtated change of ſeaſons, now known by the name of *Monſoons*; the periodical rains; the ſwelling of the rivers; the inundations which theſe occaſion; the appearance of the country during their continuance, are particularly mentioned and deſcribed. No leſs accurate are the accounts which they have given of the inhabitants, their delicate and ſlender form, their dark complexion, their black uncurled hair, their garments of cotton, their living entirely upon vegetable food, their diviſion into

[n] Arrian, lib. vi. c. 2.

ſeparate

ſeparate tribes or *caſts*, the members of which never intermarry, the cuſtom of wives burning themſelves with their deceaſed huſbands, and many other particulars, in all which they perfectly reſemble the modern Hindoos. To enter into any detail with reſpect to theſe in this place would be premature; but as the ſubject, though curious and intereſting, will lead unavoidably into diſcuſſions not well ſuited to the nature of an hiſtorical work, I ſhall reſerve my ideas concerning it for an Appendix, to be annexed to this Diſquiſition; and hope they may contribute to throw ſome additional light upon the origin and nature of the commerce with India.

Much as the Weſtern world was indebted for its knowledge of India to the expedition of Alexander, it was only a ſmall portion of that vaſt continent which he explored. His operations did not extend beyond the modern province of Lahore, and the countries on the banks of the Indus from Moultan to the ſea. Theſe, however, were ſurveyed with that degree of accuracy which I have already deſcribed; and it is a circumſtance not unworthy of notice, that this diſtrict of India which Europeans firſt entered, and with which they were beſt acquainted in ancient times, is now leſs known than almoſt any part of that continent[o], neither commerce nor war, to which, in every age, geography is chiefly indebted for its improvement, having led any nation of Europe to frequent or explore it.

[o] Rennell Mem. 114.

SECT. I.

If an untimely death had not put a period to the reign of the Macedonian hero, India, we have reaſon to think, would have been more fully explored by the ancients, and the European dominion would have been eſtabliſhed there two thouſand years ſooner. When Alexander invaded India, he had ſomething more in view than a tranſient incurſion. It was his object to annex that extenſive and opulent country to his empire; and though the refractory ſpirit of his army obliged him, at that time, to ſuſpend the proſecution of his plan, he was far from relinquiſhing it. To exhibit a general view of the meaſures which he adopted for this purpoſe, and to point out their propriety and probable ſucceſs, is not foreign from the ſubject of this Diſquiſition, and will convey a more juſt idea than is uſually entertained, of the original genius and extent of political wiſdom which diſtinguiſhed this illuſtrious man.

When Alexander became maſter of the Perſian empire, he early perceived, that with all the power of his hereditary dominions, reinforced by the troops which the aſcendant he had acquired over the various ſtates of Greece might enable him to raiſe there, he could not hope to retain in ſubjection territories ſo extenſive and populous; that to render his authority ſecure and permanent, it muſt be eſtabliſhed in the affection of the nations which he had ſubdued, and maintained by their arms; and that in order to acquire this advantage, all diſtinctions between the victors and

and vanquiſhed muſt be aboliſhed, and his European and Aſiatic ſubjects muſt be incorporated and become one people, by obeying the ſame laws, and by adopting the ſame manners, inſtitutions, and diſcipline.

SECT. I.

LIBERAL as this plan of policy was, and well adapted to accompliſh what he had in view, nothing could be more repugnant to the ideas and prejudices of his countrymen. The Greeks had ſuch an high opinion of the pre-eminence to which they were raiſed by civilization and ſcience, that they ſeem hardly to have acknowledged the reſt of mankind to be of the ſame ſpecies with themſelves. To every other people they gave the degrading appellation of Barbarians, and, in conſequence of their own boaſted ſuperiority, they aſſerted a right of dominion over them, in the ſame manner (to uſe their own expreſſion) as the ſoul has over the body, and men have over irrational animals. Extravagant as this pretenſion may now appear, it found admiſſion, to the diſgrace of ancient philoſophy, into all the ſchools. Ariſtotle, full of this opinion, in ſupport of which he employs arguments more ſubtle than ſolid[p], adviſed Alexander to govern the Greeks like ſubjects, and the Barbarians as ſlaves; to conſider the former as companions, the latter as creatures of an inferior nature[q]. But the ſentiments of the pupil were more enlarged than

[p] Ariſtot. Polit. i. c. 3—7.

[q] Plut. de Fortuna Alex. Orat. i. p. 302. vol. vii. edit. Reiſke. Strabo, lib. i. p. 116. A.

SECT. I. thoſe of his maſter, and his experience in governing men taught the monarch what the ſpeculative ſcience of the philoſopher did not diſcover. Soon after the victory at Arbela, Alexander himſelf, and, by his perſuaſion, many of his officers, aſſumed the Perſian dreſs, and conformed to ſeveral of their cuſtoms. At the ſame time he encouraged the Perſian nobles to imitate the manners of the Macedonians, to learn the Greek language, and to acquire a reliſh for the beauties of the elegant writers in that tongue, which were then univerſally ſtudied and admired. In order to render the union more complete, he reſolved to marry one of the daughters of Darius, and choſe wives for a hundred of his principal officers in the moſt illuſtrious Perſian families. Their nuptials were celebrated with great pomp and feſtivity, and with high exultation of the conquered people. In imitation of them, above ten thouſand Macedonians, of inferior rank, married Perſian women, to each of whom Alexander gave nuptial preſents, as a teſtimony of his approbation of their conduct[r].

But aſſiduouſly as Alexander laboured to unite his European and Aſiatic ſubjects by the moſt indiſſoluble ties, he did not truſt entirely to the ſucceſs of that meaſure for the ſecurity of his new conqueſts. In every province which he ſubdued, he made choice of proper ſtations, where he built and

[r] Arrian, lib. vii. c. 4. Plut. de Fort. Alex. p. 304. See NOTE VIII.

fortified

fortified cities, in which he placed garrisons composed partly of such of the natives as conformed to the Grecian manners and discipline, and partly of such of his European subjects as were worn out with the fatigues of service, and wished for repose and a permanent establishment. These cities were numerous, and served not only as a chain of posts to keep open the communication between the different provinces of his dominions, but as places of strength to over-awe and curb the conquered people. Thirty thousand of his new subjects, who had been disciplined in these cities, and armed after the European fashion, appeared before Alexander in Susa, and were formed by him into that compact solid body of infantry, known by the name of the Phalanx, which constituted the strength of a Macedonian army. But in order to secure entire authority over this new corps, as well as to render it more effective, he appointed that every officer in it entrusted with command, either superior or subaltern, should be European. As the ingenuity of mankind naturally has recourse in similar situations to the same expedients, the European powers, who now in their Indian territories employ numerous bodies of the natives in their service, have, in forming the establishment of these troops, adopted the same maxims; and, probably without knowing it, have modelled their battalions of Seapoys upon the same principles as Alexander did his phalanx of Persians.

The farther Alexander pushed his conquests from the banks of the Euphrates, which may be considered

SECT. I.

considered as the center of his dominions, he found it neceſſary to build and to fortify a greater number of cities. Several of theſe to the Eaſt and South of the Caſpian ſea, are mentioned by ancient authors; and in India itſelf he founded two cities on the banks of the Hydaſpes, and a third on the Aceſines, both navigable rivers, which, after uniting their ſtreams, fall into the Indus[q]. From the choice of ſuch ſituations, it is obvious that he intended, by means of theſe cities, to keep open a communication with India, not only by land, but by ſea. It was chiefly with a view to the latter of theſe objects, (as I have already obſerved,) that he examined the navigation of the Indus with ſo much attention. With the ſame view, on his return to Suſa, he, in perſon, ſurveyed the courſe of the Euphrates and Tigris, and gave directions to remove the cataracts or dams, with which the ancient monarchs of Perſia, induced by a peculiar precept of their religion, which enjoined them to guard with the utmoſt care againſt defiling any of the elements, had conſtructed near the mouths of theſe rivers, in order to ſhut out their ſubjects from any acceſs to the ocean[r]. By opening the navigation in this manner, he propoſed, that the valuable commodities of India ſhould be conveyed from the Perſian Gulf into the interior parts of his Aſiatic dominions, while by the Arabian Gulf they ſhould be carried to Alexandria, and diſtributed to the reſt of the world.

[q] See NOTE IX.

[r] Arrian, lib. vi. c. 7. Strabo, lib. xvi. p. 1074. &c. See NOTE X.

SECT. I.

GRAND and extenſive as theſe ſchemes were, the precautions employed, and the arrangements made for carrying them into execution, were ſo various and ſo proper, that Alexander had good reaſon to entertain ſanguine hopes of their proving ſucceſsful. At the time when the mutinous ſpirit of his ſoldiers obliged him to relinquiſh his operations in India, he was not thirty years of age complete. At this enterprizing period of life, a Prince, of a ſpirit ſo active, perſevering, and indefatigable, muſt have ſoon found means to reſume a favourite meaſure on which he had been long intent. If he had invaded India a ſecond time, he would not, as formerly, have been obliged to force his way through hoſtile and unexplored regions, oppoſed at every ſtep by nations and tribes of Barbarians whoſe names had never reached Greece. All Aſia, from the ſhores of the Ionian ſea to the banks of the Hyphaſis, would then have been ſubject to his dominion; and through that immenſe ſtretch of country he had eſtabliſhed ſuch a chain of cities, or fortified ſtations[1], that his armies might have continued their march with ſafety, and have found a regular ſucceſſion of magazines provided for their ſubſiſtence. Nor would it have been difficult for him to bring into the field, forces ſufficient to have atchieved the conqueſt of a country ſo populous and extenſive as India. Having armed and diſciplined his ſubjects in the Eaſt like Europeans, they would have been ambitious to imitate, and to equal their inſtruc-

[1] See NOTE XI.

tors,

SECT. I.

tors, and Alexander might have drawn recruits, not from his ſcanty domains in Macedonia and Greece, but from the vaſt regions of Aſia, which, in every age, has covered the earth, and aſtoniſhed mankind with its numerous armies. When at the head of ſuch a formidable power he had reached the confines of India, he might have entered it under circumſtances very different from thoſe in his firſt expedition. He had ſecured a firm footing there, partly by means of the garriſons that he left in the three cities which he had built and fortified, and partly by his alliance with Taxiles and Porus. Theſe two Indian Princes, won by Alexander's humanity and beneficence, which, as they were virtues ſeldom diſplayed in the ancient mode of carrying on war, excited of courſe an higher degree of admiration and gratitude, had continued ſteady in their attachment to the Macedonians. Reinforced by their troops, and guided by their information as well as by the experience which he had acquired in his former campaigns, Alexander muſt have made rapid progreſs in a country, where every invader, from his time to the preſent age, has proved ſucceſsful.

But this and all his other ſplendid ſchemes were terminated at once by his untimely death. In conſequence of that, however, events took place, which illuſtrate and confirm the juſtneſs of the preceding ſpeculations and conjectures by evidence the moſt ſtriking and ſatisfactory. When that great empire, which the ſuperior

genius of Alexander had kept united and in subjection, no longer felt his superintending controul, it broke into pieces, and its various provinces were seized by his principal officers, and parcelled out among them. From ambition, emulation, and personal animosity, they soon turned their arms against one another; and as several of the leaders were equally eminent for political abilities and for military skill, the contest was maintained long, and carried on with frequent vicissitudes of fortune. Amidst the various convulsions and revolutions which these occasioned, it was found that the measures of Alexander for the preservation of his conquests had been concerted with such sagacity, that, upon the final restoration of tranquillity, the Macedonian dominion continued to be established in every part of Asia, and not one province had shaken off the yoke. Even India, the most remote of Alexander's conquests, quietly submitted to Pytho the son of Agenor, and afterwards to Seleucus, who successively obtained dominion over that part of Asia. Porus and Taxiles, notwithstanding the death of their benefactor, neither declined submission to the authority of the Macedonians, nor made any attempt to recover independence.

SECT. I.

During the contests for power and superiority among the successors of Alexander, Seleucus who, in every effort of enterprising ambition, was inferior to none of them, having rendered himself master of all the provinces of the Persian empire comprehended under the name of Upper Asia,

SECT. I. Asia, considered those countries of India which had been subdued by Alexander, as belonging to that portion of the Macedonian empire of which he was now the sovereign. Seleucus, like all the officers formed under Alexander, entertained such high ideas of the advantages which might be derived from a commercial intercourse with India, as induced him to march into that country, partly with a view of establishing his own authority there, and partly in order to curb Sandracottus, who having lately acquired the sovereignty of the Prasij, a powerful nation on the banks of the Ganges, threatened to attack the Macedonians, whose Indian territories bordered on his dominions. Unfortunately no account of this expedition, which seems to have been splendid and successful, has reached our times. All we know of it is, that he advanced considerably beyond the utmost boundary of Alexander's progress in India[t], and would probably have proceeded much farther, if he had not been constrained to stop short in his career, in order to oppose Antigonus, who was preparing to invade his dominions at the head of a formidable army. Before he began his march towards the Euphrates, he concluded a treaty with Sandracottus; in consequence of which, that monarch quietly retained the kingdom he had acquired. But the powers and possessions of the Macedonians seem to have remained unimpaired during the reign of Seleucus, which terminated forty-two years after the death of Alexander.

[t] See NOTE XII.

SECT. L

WITH a view of cultivating a friendly intercourse with Sandracottus, Seleucus made choice of Megasthenes, an officer, who, from his having accompanied Alexander in his expedition into India, had some knowledge of the state of the country, and the manners of its inhabitants, and sent him as his ambassador to Palibothra[u]. In this famous capital of the Prasij, situated on the banks of the Ganges, Megasthenes resided several years, and was probably the first European who ever beheld that mighty river, far superior to any of the ancient continent in magnitude[x], and no less distinguished by the fertility of the countries through which it flows. This journey of Megasthenes to Palibothra made Europeans acquainted with a large extent of country, of which they had not hitherto any knowledge; for Alexander did not advance farther towards the south-east than that part of the river Hydraotes or Raûvee, where the modern city of Lahore is situated, and Palibothra, the site of which, as it is a capital position in the geography of ancient India, I have investigated with the utmost attention, appears to me the same with that of the modern city of Allahabad, at the confluence of the two great rivers, Jumna and Ganges[y]. As the road from Lahore to Allahabad runs through some of the most cultivated and opulent provinces of India, the more the country was explored; the idea of its value rose higher. Accordingly, what Megas-

[u] Strabo, lib. ii. p. 121, &c. Arrian. Hist. Ind. passim.
[x] See NOTE XIII. [y] See NOTE XIV.

SECT. I.

thenes obſerved during his progreſs to Palibothra, and his reſidence there, made ſuch an impreſſion upon his own mind, as induced him to publiſh an ample account of India, in order to make his countrymen more thoroughly acquainted with its importance. From his writings the ancients ſeem to have derived almoſt all their knowledge of the interior ſtate of India, and from comparing the three moſt ample accounts of it, by Diodorus Siculus, Strabo, and Arrian, they appear manifeſtly, from their near reſemblance, to be a tranſcript of his words. But, unfortunately, Megaſthenes was ſo fond of the marvellous, that he mingled with the truths which he related, many extravagant fictions; and to him may be traced up the fabulous tales of men with ears ſo large that they could wrap themſelves up in them, of others with a ſingle eye, without mouths, without noſes, with long feet, and toes turned backwards, of people only three ſpans in height, of wild men with heads in the ſhape of a wedge, of ants as large as foxes that dug up gold, and many other things no leſs wonderful[z]. The extracts from his narrative which have been tranſmitted to us by Strabo, Arrian, and other writers, ſeem not to be entitled to credit, unleſs when they are ſupported by internal evidence, and confirmed by the teſtimony of other ancient authors, or when they coincide with the experience of modern times. His account, however, of the dimenſions and geography of India, is curious and accurate.

[z] Strabo, lib. xx. 1032. A. 1037. C.

SECT. I.

His description of the power and opulence of the Prasij perfectly resembles that which might have been given of some of the greater states in the modern Indostan, before the establishment of the Mahomedan or European power in India, and is consonant to the accounts which Alexander had received concerning that people. He was informed, as has been already mentioned, that they were prepared to oppose him on the banks of the Ganges, with an army consisting of twenty thousand cavalry, two hundred thousand infantry, and two thousand armed chariots[a]; and Megasthenes relates, that he had an audience of Sandracottus in a place where he was encamped with an army of four hundred thousand men[b]. The enormous dimensions which he assigns to Palibothra, of no less than ten miles in length, and two in breadth, and surrounded by walls in which there were five hundred and seventy towers, and sixty-four gates, would probably have been ranked by Europeans among the wonders which he delighted to relate, if they were not now well acquainted with the rambling manner in which the cities of India were built, and did not know with certainty that, both in former and in the present times, it might boast of cities still more extensive[c].

This embassy of Megasthenes to Sandracottus, and another of Diamachus to his son and succes-

[a] Diod. Sicul. lib. xvii. p. 232. Q. Curt. lib. ix. c. 2.
[b] Strabo, lib. xv. p. 1035. C. [c] Rennell Mem. 49, 50.

SECT. II.

for Allitrochidas, are the laſt tranſactions of the Syrian monarchs with India, of which we have any account[d]. Nor can we either fix with accuracy the time, or deſcribe the manner in which their poſſeſſions in India were wreſted from them. It is probable that they were obliged to abandon that country ſoon after the death of Seleucus[e].

But though the great monarchs of Syria loſt, about this period, thoſe provinces in India, which had been ſubject to their dominions, the Greeks in a ſmaller kingdom, compoſed of ſome fragments of Alexander's empire, ſtill maintained an intercourſe wlth India, and even made ſome conſiderable acquiſition of territory there. This was the kingdom of Bactria, originally ſubject to Seleucus, but wreſted from his ſon or grandſon, and rendered an independent ſtate, about ſixty-nine years after the death of Alexander. Concerning the tranſactions of this kingdom, we muſt reſt ſatisfied with gleaning a few imperfect hints in ancient authors. From them we learn that its commerce with India was great; that the conqueſts of the Bactrian kings in that country, were more extenſive than thoſe of Alexander himſelf, and particularly that they recovered poſſeſſion of the diſtrict near the mouth of the Indus, which he had ſubdued[f]. Each of the ſix princes who reigned in Bactria, carried on mili-

[d] See NOTE XV. [e] Juſtin. lib. xv. c. 4.

[f] Strabo, lib. xi. 785. D. lib. xv. 1006. B. Juſtin. lib. xli. c. 4. Bayer Hiſt. Regni Græcor. Bactriani, paſſim.

tary

tary operations in India with ſuch ſucceſs, that they penetrated far into the interior part of the country, and proud of the conqueſts which they had made, as well as of the extenſive dominions over which they reigned, ſome of them aſſumed the lofty title of *Great King*, which diſtinguiſhed the Perſian monarchs in the days of their higheſt ſplendour. But we ſhould not have known how long this kingdom of Bactria ſubſiſted, or in what manner it terminated, if M. de Guignes had not called in the hiſtorians of China to ſupply the defects of the Greek and Roman writers. By them we are informed, that about one hundred and twenty-ſix years before the Chriſtian æra, a powerful horde of Tartars, puſhed from their native ſeats on the confines of China, and obliged to move towards the weſt by the preſſure of a more numerous body that rolled on behind them, paſſed the Jaxartes, and pouring in upon Bactria, like an irreſiſtible torrent, overwhelmed that kingdom, and put an end to the dominion of the Greeks[g] there, after it had been eſtabliſhed near one hundred and thirty years[h].

From this time until the cloſe of the fifteenth century, when the Portugueſe, by doubling the Cape of Good Hope, opened a new communication with the Eaſt, and carried their victorious arms into every part of India, no European power acquired territory, or eſtabliſhed its dominion there. During this long period, of more than

[g] Mem. de Literat. tom. xxv. p. 17, &c.
[h] See NOTE XVI.

SECT. I. fixteen hundred years, all ſchemes of conqueſt in India ſeem to have been totally relinquiſhed, and nothing more was aimed at by any nation, than to ſecure an intercourſe of trade with that opulent country.

It was in Egypt that the ſeat of this intercourſe was eſtabliſhed; and it is not without ſurpriſe that we obſerve how ſoon and how regularly the commerce with the Eaſt came to be carried on by that channel, in which the ſagacity of Alexander deſtined it to flow. Ptolemy, the ſon of Lagus, as ſoon as he took poſſeſſion of Egypt, eſtabliſhed the ſeat of government in Alexandria. By ſome exertions of authority, and many acts of liberality, but chiefly by the fame of his mild and equal adminiſtration, he drew ſuch a number of inhabitants to this favourite reſidence, that it ſoon became a populous and wealthy city. As Ptolemy deſerved and had poſſeſſed the confidence of Alexander more perfectly than any of his officers, he knew well that his chief object in founding Alexandria was to ſecure the advantages ariſing from the trade with India. A long and proſperous reign was favourable to the proſecution of that object, and though ancient authors have not enabled us to trace the ſteps which the firſt Ptolemy took for this purpoſe, we have a ſtriking evidence of his extraordinary attention to naval affairs, in his erecting a light-houſe on the iſland of Pharos, at the mouth of the harbour of Alexandria[1], a work of ſuch magnificence as

[1] Strabo, lib. xvii. p. 1140. C.

to be reckoned one of the ſeven wonders of the world. With reſpect to the commercial arrangements of his ſon Ptolemy Philadelphus, we have more perfect information. In order to bring the trade with India, (which began to revive at Tyre, its ancient ſtation[k],) to center in Alexandria, he ſet about forming a canal, an hundred cubits in breadth, and thirty cubits in depth, between Arſinoe on the Red Sea, not far from the ſituation of the modern Suez, and the Peleuſiac or eaſtern branch of the Nile, by means of which the productions of India might have been conveyed to that capital wholly by water. But either on account of ſome danger apprehended from completing it, that work was never finiſhed; or from the ſlow and dangerous navigation towards the northern extremity of the Red Sea, this canal was found to be of ſo little uſe, that in order to facilitate the communication with India, he built a city on the weſt coaſt of that ſea, almoſt under the Tropic, to which he gave the name of Berenice[l]. This new city ſoon became the ſtaple of the trade with India[m]. From Berenice the goods were tranſported by land to Coptos, a city three miles diſtant from the Nile, but which had a communication with that river by a navigable canal, of which there are ſtill ſome remains[n], and thence carried down the ſtream to Alexandria. The diſtance between Berenice

[k] Strabo, lib. xvi. 1089. A.
[l] Strabo, lib. xvii. 1156. D. Plin. Nat. Hiſt. lib. vi. c. 29.
[m] See NOTE XVII.
[n] D'Anville Mem. de l'Egypte, p. 21.

SECT. I. and Coptos was, according to Pliny, two hundred and fifty-eight Roman miles, and the road lay through the defart of Thebais, almoft entirely deftitute of water. But the attention of a powerful monarch made provifion for fupplying this want, by fearching for fprings, and wherever thefe were found he built inns, or more probably in the eaftern ftyle caravanferas, for the accommodation of merchants[o]. In this channel the intercourfe between the Eaft and Weft continued to be carried on during two hundred and fifty years, as long as Egypt remained an independent kingdom.

THE fhips deftined for India took their departure from Berenice, and failing, according to the ancient mode of navigation, along the Arabian fhore, to the promontory Syagrus, (now Cape Rafalgate,) held their courfe along the coaft of Perfia, either directly to Pattala, (now Tatta,) at the head of the lower Delta of the Indus, or to fome other emporium on the weft coaft of India. To this part of India which Alexander had vifited and fubdued, the commerce under the protection of the Egyptian monarchs feems to have been confined for a confiderable time. Afterwards a more convenient courfe was followed, and from Cape Rafalgate veffels failed in a direct courfe to Zizerus. This, according to M. de Montefquieu[p], was the

[o] Strabo, lib. xvii. p. 1157. D. 1169.
[p] L'Efprit des Loix, lib. xxi. c. 7.

kingdom

kingdom of Sigertis, on the ſea-coaſt adjacent to the mouth of the Indus, conquered by the Greek monarchs of Bactria; according to Major Rennell [q], it was a port on the northern part of the Malabar coaſt. Ancient authors have not conveyed ſuch information as will enable us to pronounce with certainty, which of theſe two oppoſite opinions is beſt founded. Nor can we point out with accuracy, what were the other ports in India which the merchants from Berenice frequented, when that trade was firſt opened. As they ſailed in veſſels of ſmall burden, which crept timidly along the coaſt, it is probable that their voyages were circumſcribed within very narrow limits, and that under the Ptolemies, no conſiderable progreſs was made in the diſcovery of India [r].

SECT. I.

From this monopoly of the commerce by ſea between the eaſt and weſt, which Egypt long enjoyed, it derived that extraordinary degree of opulence and power for which it was conſpicuous. In modern times, acquainted with the vigilant and enterprifing activity of commercial rivalſhip, there is hardly any circumſtance in ancient ſtory which appears more ſurpriſing, than that the ſovereigns of Egypt ſhould have been permitted to engroſs this lucrative trade without competition, or any attempt to wreſt it out of their hands; eſpecially as the powerful monarchs of Syria might, from the Perſian Gulf, have carried on an intercourſe with the ſame

[q] Introduct. p. xxxvii. [r] See NOTE XVIII.

parts

SECT. I. parts of India, by a ſhorter and ſafer courſe of navigation. Different conſiderations ſeem to have induced them ſo tamely to relinquiſh all the obvious advantages of this commerce. The Kings of Egypt, by their attention to maritime affairs, had formed a powerful fleet, which gave them ſuch decided command of the ſea, that they could have cruſhed with eaſe any rival in trade. No commercial intercourſe ſeems ever to have been carried on by ſea between Perſia and India. The Perſians had ſuch an inſuperable averſion to that element, or were ſo much afraid of foreign invaſion, that their monarchs (as I have already obſerved) obſtructed the navigation of the great rivers, which gave acceſs to the interior parts of the country, by artificial works. As their ſubjects, however, were no leſs deſirous than the people around them to poſſeſs the valuable productions and elegant manufactures of India, theſe were conveyed to all the parts of their extenſive dominions by land-carriage. The commodities deſtined for the ſupply of the northern provinces, were tranſported on camels from the banks of the Indus to thoſe of the Oxus, down the ſtream of which they were carried to the Caſpian ſea, and diſtributed, partly by land-carriage, and partly by navigable rivers, through the different countries, bounded on one hand by the Caſpian, and on the other by the Euxine ſea[s]. The commodities of India intended for the

[s] Strabo, lib. xii. 776. D. Plin. Nat. Hiſt. lib. vi. c. 17.

ſouthern

ſouthern and interior provinces, proceeded by land from the Caſpian gates to ſome of the great rivers, by which they were circulated through every part of the country. This was the ancient mode of intercourſe with India, while the Perſian empire was governed by its native Princes; and it has been obſerved in every age, that when any branch of commerce has got into a certain channel, although it may be neither the moſt proper nor the moſt commodious one, it requires long time, and conſiderable efforts, to give it a different direction[t].

To all theſe reaſons for ſuffering the monarchs of Egypt to continue in the undiſturbed poſſeſſion of the trade with India by ſea, another may be added. Many of the ancients, by an error in geography extremely unaccountable, and in which they perſiſted, notwithſtanding repeated opportunities of obtaining more accurate information, believed the Caſpian ſea to be a branch of the great Northern ocean, and the Kings of Syria might hope by that means to open a communication with Europe, and to circulate through it the valuable productions of the Eaſt, without intruding into thoſe ſeas, the navigation of which the Egyptian monarchs ſeemed to conſider as their excluſive right. This idea had been early formed by the Greeks, when they became maſters of Aſia. Seleucus Nicator, the firſt and moſt ſagacious of the Syrian kings, at the

[t] See Note XIX.

time

SECT. I. time when he was aſſaſſinated, entertained thoughts of forming a junction between the Caſpian and Euxine ſeas by a canal[u], and if this could have been effected, his ſubjects, beſides the extenſion of their trade in Europe, might have ſupplied all the countries in the North of Aſia, on the coaſt of the Euxine ſea as well as many of thoſe which ſtretch eaſtward from the Caſpian, with the productions of India. As thoſe countries, though now thinly inhabited by a miſerable race of men, deſtitute of induſtry and of wealth, were in ancient times extremely populous, and filled with great and opulent cities, this muſt have been conſidered as a branch of commerce of ſuch magnitude and value, as to render the ſecuring of it an object worthy the attention of the moſt powerful monarch.

But while the monarchs of Egypt and Syria laboured with emulation and ardour to ſecure to their ſubjects all the advantages of the Indian trade, a power aroſe in the Weſt which proved fatal to both. The Romans, by the vigour of their military inſtitutions, and the wiſdom of their political conduct, having rendered themſelves maſters of all Italy and Sicily, ſoon overturned the rival republic of Carthage, ſubjected Macedonia and Greece, extended their dominion over Syria, and at laſt turned their victorious arms againſt Egypt, the only kingdom remaining of

A. C. 55.

[u] Plin. Nat. Hiſt. lib. vi. c. 11.

thoſe

SECT. I.

thoſe eſtabliſhed by the ſucceſſors of Alexander the Great. After a ſeries of events which belong not to the ſubject of this Diſquiſition, Egypt was annexed to the Roman empire, and reduced into the form of a Roman province by Auguſtus. Aware of its great importance, he, with that provident ſagacity which diſtinguiſhes his character, not only reſerved it as one of the provinces ſubject immediately to imperial authority, but by various precautions, well known to every ſcholar, provided for its ſecurity. This extraordinary ſolicitude ſeems to have proceeded not only from conſidering Egypt as one of the chief granaries on which the capital depended for ſubſiſtence, but as the ſeat of that lucrative commerce which had enabled its ancient monarchs to amaſs ſuch enormous wealth, as excited the admiration and envy of other Princes, and produced, when brought into the treaſury of the empire, a conſiderable alteration both in the value of property, and the ſtate of manners, in Rome itſelf.

A. C. 30.

AN

HISTORICAL DISQUISITION

CONCERNING

ANCIENT INDIA.

SECTION II.

Intercourſe with India, from the Eſtabliſhment of the Roman Dominion in Egypt, to the Conqueſt of that Kingdom by the Mahomedans.

SECT. II.

UPON the conqueſt of Egypt by the Romans, and the reduction of that kingdom to a province of their empire, the trade with India continued to be carried on in the ſame mode under their powerful protection: Rome, enriched with the ſpoils and the tribute of almoſt all the known world, had acquired a taſte for luxuries of every kind. Among people of this deſcription, the productions of India have always been held in the higheſt eſtimation. The capital of the greateſt empire ever eſtabliſhed in Europe, filled with citizens, who had now no occupation but to enjoy and diſſipate the wealth accumulated by their anceſtors,

anceſtors, demanded every thing elegant, rare, or coſtly, which that remote region could furniſh, in order to ſupport its pomp, or heighten its pleaſures. To ſupply this demand, new and extraordinary efforts became requiſite, and the commerce with India increaſed to a degree, which (as I have obſerved in another place[a]) will appear aſtoniſhing even to the preſent age, in which that branch of trade has been extended far beyond the practice or conception of any former period.

Besides the Indian commodities imported into the capital of the empire from Egypt, the Romans received an additional ſupply of them by another mode of conveyance. From the earlieſt times, there ſeems to have been ſome communication between Meſopotamia, and other provinces on the banks of the Euphrates, and thoſe parts of Syria and Paleſtine, which lay near the Mediterranean. The migration of Abram from Ur, of the Chaldees from Sichem in the land of Canaan, is an inſtance of this[b]. The journey through the deſart, which ſeparated theſe countries, was much facilitated by its affording one ſtation abounding with water, and capable of cultivation. As the intercourſe increaſed, the poſſeſſion of this ſtation became an object of ſo much importance, that Solomon, when he turned his attention towards the extenſion of commerce

[a] Hiſt. of America, vol. i. p. 25. [b] Geneſ. xi. xii.

among

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among his ſubjects, built a fenced city there[c]. Its Syrian name of *Tadmor* in the wilderneſs, and its Greek one of *Palmyra*, are both deſcriptive of its ſituation in a ſpot adorned with palm-trees. This is not only plentifully ſupplied with water, but ſurrounded by a portion of fertile land, which (though of no great extent) renders it a delightful habitation in the midſt of barren ſands and an inhoſpitable deſart. Its happy poſition, at the diſtance of eighty-five miles from the river Euphrates, and about one hundred and ſeventeen miles from the neareſt coaſt of the Mediterranean[d], induced its inhabitants to enter with ardour into the trade of conveying commodities from one of theſe to the other. As the moſt valuable productions of India, brought up the Euphrates from the Perſian Gulf, are of ſuch ſmall bulk as to bear the expence of a long land-carriage, this trade ſoon became ſo conſiderable that the opulence and power of Palmyra increaſed rapidly. Its government was of the form which is beſt ſuited to the genius of a commercial city, republican; and from the peculiar advantages of its ſituation, as well as the ſpirit of its inhabitants, it long maintained its independence, though ſurrounded by powerful and ambitious neighbours.

[c] 1 Kings, ix. 18. 2 Chron. viii. 4.

[d] In a former edition, I ſtated the diſtance of Palmyra from the Euphrates at ſixty miles, and from the Mediterranean at two hundred and three miles. Into theſe errors I was led by M. D'Anville, who, in his Memoire ſur l'Euphrate et le Tigris, a work publiſhed in old age, did not retain his wonted accuracy. From information communicated by Major Rennell, I have ſubſtituted the true diſtances.

ıder the Syrian monarchs defcended from Se- ıcus it attained to its higheft degree of fplen- ür and wealth, one great fource of which feems have been the fupplying their fubjects with dian commodities. When Syria fubmitted to ɜ irrefiftible arms of Rome, Palmyra continued wards of two centuries a free ftate, and its endfhip was courted with emulation and foli- ude by the Romans, and their rivals for em- 'e, the Parthians. That it traded with both, d particularly that from it Rome as well as ıer parts of the empire received the produc- ıns of India, we learn from Appian an author good credit[e]. But in tracing the progrefs of e commerce of the ancients with the Eaft, I ɔuld not have ventured, upon his fingle tefti- ɔny, to mention this among the channels of te in which it was carried on, if a fingular dif- very, for which we are indebted to the liberal riofity and enterprifing fpirit of our own coun- ymen, did not confirm and illuftrate what he lates. Towards the clofe of the laft century, me gentlemen of the Englifh factory at Aleppo, cited by what they heard in the Eaft concern- g the wonderful ruins of Palmyra, ventured, ɔtwithftanding the fatigue and danger of a urney through the defart, to vifit them. To ıeir aftonifhment they beheld a fertile fpot of me miles in extent arifing like an ifland out of vaft plain of fand, covered with the remains of mples, porticoes, aqueducts, and other public

[e] Appian. de Bello Civil. lib. v. p. 1076. edit. Tollii.

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works, which, in magnificence and ſplendour, and ſome of them in elegance, were not unworthy of Athens or of Rome in their moſt proſperous ſtate. Allured by their deſcription of them, about ſixty years thereafter, a party of more enlightened travellers, having reviewed the ruins of Palmyra with greater attention and more ſcientific ſkill, declared that what they beheld there exceeded the moſt exalted ideas which they had formed concerning it[f].

FROM both theſe accounts, as well as from recollecting the extraordinary degree of power to which Palmyra had attained, when Egypt, Syria, Meſopotamia, and a conſiderable part of Aſia Minor were conquered by its arms; when Odenatus, its chief magiſtrate, was decorated with the imperial purple, and Zenobia contended for the dominion of the Eaſt with Rome under one of its moſt warlike Emperors, it is evident that a ſtate which could derive little importance from its original territory, muſt have owed its aggrandiſement to the opulence acquired by extenſive commerce. Of this the Indian trade was undoubtedly the moſt conſiderable, and moſt lucrative branch. But it is a cruel mortification, in ſearching for what is inſtructive in the hiſtory of paſt times, to find that the exploits of conquerors who have deſolated the earth, and the freaks of tyrants who have rendered nations unhappy, are recorded with minute

[f] Wood's Ruins of Palmyra, p. 37.

and often diſguſting accuracy, while the diſcovery of uſeful arts, and the progreſs of the moſt beneficial branches of commerce, are paſſed over in ſilence, and ſuffered to ſink into oblivion.

After the conqueſt of Palmyra by Aurelian, trade never revived there. At preſent a few miſerable huts of beggarly Arabs are ſcattered in the courts of its ſtately temples, or deform its elegant porticoes; and exhibit an humiliating contraſt to its ancient magnificence.

But while the merchants of Egypt and Syria exerted their activity in order to ſupply the increaſing demands of Rome for Indian commodities, and vied with each other in their efforts, the eagerneſs of gain (as Pliny obſerves) brought India itſelf nearer to the reſt of the world. In the courſe of their voyages to that country, the Greek and Egyptian pilots could not fail to obſerve the regular ſhifting of the periodical winds or monſoons, and how ſteadily they continued to blow during one part of the year from the Eaſt, and during the other from the Weſt. Encouraged by attending to this circumſtance, Hippalus, the commander of a ſhip engaged in the Indian trade, ventured, about fourſcore years after Egypt was annexed to the Roman empire, to relinquiſh the ſlow and circuitous courſe which I have deſcribed, and ſtretching boldly from the mouth of the Arabian Gulf acroſs the ocean, was carried by the weſtern mon-

SECT. II. ſoon to Muſiris, a harbour in that part of India, now known by the name of the Malabar coaſt.

THIS route to India was held to be a diſcovery of ſuch importance, that in order to perpetuate the memory of the inventor, the name of Hippalus was given to the wind which enabled him to perform the voyage[5]. As this was one of the greateſt efforts of navigation in the ancient world, and opened the beſt communication by ſea between the Eaſt and Weſt that was known for fourteen hundred years, it merits a particular deſcription. Fortunately Pliny has enabled us to give it with a degree of accuracy, which can ſeldom be attained in tracing the naval or commercial operations of the ancients. From Alexandria (he obſerves) to Juliopolis is two miles; there the cargo deſtined for India is embarked on the Nile, and is carried to Coptos, which is diſtant three hundred and three miles, and the voyage is uſually accompliſhed in twelve days. From Coptos goods are conveyed by land-carriage to Berenice on the Arabian Gulf, halting at different ſtations regulated according to the conveniency of watering. The diſtance between theſe cities is two hundred and fifty-eight miles. On account of the heat the caravan travels only during the night, and the journey is finiſhed on the twelfth day. From Berenice, ſhips take their departure about midſummer, and in thirty days reach Ocelis (Gella) at the mouth of the Arabian

[5] Perip. Mar. Erythr. p. 32.

Gulf,

Gulf, or Cane (Cape Fartaque) on the coaſt of Arabia Felix. Thence they ſail in forty days to Muſiris, the firſt emporium in India. They begin their voyage homewards early in the Egyptian month Thibi, which anſwers to our December; they ſail with a north-eaſt wind, and when they enter the Arabian Gulf meet with a ſouth or ſouth-weſt wind, and thus complete the voyage in leſs than a year[h].

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THE account which Pliny gives of Muſiris, and of Barace, another harbour not far diſtant, which was likewiſe frequented by the ſhips from Berenice, as being both ſo incommodious for trade on account of the ſhallowneſs of the ports, that it became neceſſary to diſcharge and take in the cargoes in ſmall boats, does not enable us to fix their poſition with perfect accuracy. This deſcription applies to many ports on the Malabar coaſt, but from two circumſtances mentioned by him; one, that they are not far diſtant from Cottonara, the country which produces pepper in great abundance; and the other, that in ſailing towards them the courſe lay near Nitrias, the ſtation of the pirates; I adopt the opinion of Major Rennell, that they were ſituated ſomewhere between Goa and Tellicherry, and that probably the modern Meerzaw or Merjee is the Muſiris of the ancients, and Barcelore their Barace[i].

[h] Plin. Nat. Hiſt. lib. vi. c. 23. See NOTE XX.
[i] Introd. p. xxxvii.

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As in these two ports was the principal staple of the trade between Egypt and India, when in its most flourishing state, this seems to be the proper place for inquiring into the nature of the commerce with the ancients, particularly the Romans, carried on with that country, and for enumerating the commodities most in request, which they imported from it. But as the operations of commerce and the mode of regulating it, were little attended to in those states of antiquity, of whose transactions we have any accurate knowledge; their historians hardly enter into any detail concerning a subject of such subordinate importance in their political system, and it is mostly from brief hints, detached facts, and incidental observations, that we can gather information concerning it[k].

In every age, it has been a commerce of luxury, rather than of necessity, which has been carried on between Europe and India. Its elegant manufactures, spices, and precious stones, are neither objects of desire to nations of simple manners, nor are such nations possessed of wealth sufficient to purchase them. But at the time the Romans became masters of the Indian trade, they were not only (as has already been observed) in that stage of society when men are eager to obtain every thing that can render the enjoyment of life more exquisite, or add to its splendour, but they had acquired all the fantastic tastes formed by the

[k] See NOTE XXI.

caprice

caprice and extravagance of wealth. They were of consequence highly delighted with those new objects of gratification with which India supplied them in such abundance. The productions of that country, natural as well as artificial, seem to have been much the same in that age as in the present. But the taste of the Romans in luxury differed in many respects from that of modern times, and of course their demands from India differed considerably from ours.

In order to convey an idea of their demands as complete as possible, I shall in the first place make some observations on the three great articles of general importation from India. 1. Spices and aromatics. 2. Precious stones and pearls. 3. Silk. And then I shall give some account (as far as I can venture to do it from authentic information) of the assortment of cargoes both outward and homeward bound, for the vessels fitted out at Berenice to different ports of India.

I. Spices and aromatics. From the mode of religious worship in the heathen world; from the incredible number of their deities, and of the temples consecrated to them; the consumption of frankincense and other aromatics which were used in every sacred function, must have been very great. But the vanity of men occasioned a greater consumption of these fragrant substances, than their piety. It was the custom of the Romans to burn the bodies of their dead, and they deemed it a display of magnificence, to cover not

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only the body but the funeral pile on which it was laid, with the most costly spices. At the funeral of Sylla, two hundred and ten burdens of spices were strewed upon the pile. Nero is reported to have burnt a quantity of cinnamon and cassia at the funeral of Pappœa, greater than the countries from which it was imported produced in one year. We consume in heaps these precious substances with the carcases of the dead (says Pliny): We offer them to the Gods only in grains[m]. It was not from India, I am aware, but from Arabia, that aromatics were first imported into Europe; and some of them, particularly frankincense, were productions of that country. But the Arabians were accustomed, together with spices of native growth, to furnish foreign merchants with others of higher value, which they brought from India, and the regions beyond it. The commercial intercourse of the Arabians with the eastern parts of Asia, was not only early, but considerable. By means of their trading caravans, they conveyed into their own country all the valuable productions of the East, among which, spices held a chief place. In every ancient account of Indian commodities, spices and aromatics of various kinds form a principal article[n]. Some authors assert that the greater part of those purchased in Arabia were not the growth of that country, but brought from India[o].

[m] Nat. Hist. lib. xii. c. 18.

[n] Peripl. Mar. Eryth. p. 22. 28. Strabo, lib. ii. p. 156. A. lib. xv. p. 1018. A.

[o] Strabo, lib. xvii. p. 1129. C.

That

That this aſſertion was well founded, appears from what has been obſerved in modern times. The frankincenſe of Arabia, though reckoned the peculiar and moſt precious production of the country, is much inferior in quality to that imported into it from the Eaſt; and it is chiefly with the latter, that the Arabians at preſent ſupply the extenſive demands of various provinces of Aſia for this commodity [p]. It is upon good authority, then, that I have mentioned the importation of ſpices as one of the moſt conſiderable branches of ancient commerce with India. In the Auguſtan age, an entire ſtreet in Rome ſeems to have been occupied by thoſe who ſold frankincenſe, pepper, and other aromatics [q].

II. Precious ſtones, together with which pearls may be claſſed, ſeem to be the article next in value imported by the Romans from the Eaſt. As theſe have no pretenſion to be of any real uſe, their value ariſes entirely from their beauty and their rarity, and even when eſtimated moſt moderately is always high. But among nations far advanced in luxury, when they are deemed not only ornaments, but marks of diſtinction, the vain and the opulent vie ſo eagerly with one another for the poſſeſſion of them, that they riſe in price to an exorbitant and almoſt incredible height. Diamonds, though the art of cutting them was imperfectly known to the ancients, held an high place in eſtimation among them as well as among

[p] Neibuhr. Deſcript. de l'Arabie, tom. i. p. 126.
[q] Hor. lib. ii. epiſt. 1.

us.

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among his ſubjects, built a fenced city there[c]. Its Syrian name of *Tadmor* in the wilderneſs, and its Greek one of *Palmyra*, are both deſcriptive of its ſituation in a ſpot adorned with palm-trees. This is not only plentifully ſupplied with water, but ſurrounded by a portion of fertile land, which (though of no great extent) renders it a delightful habitation in the midſt of barren ſands and an inhoſpitable deſart. Its happy poſition, at the diſtance of eighty-five miles from the river Euphrates, and about one hundred and ſeventeen miles from the neareſt coaſt of the Mediterranean[d], induced its inhabitants to enter with ardour into the trade of conveying commodities from one of theſe to the other. As the moſt valuable productions of India, brought up the Euphrates from the Perſian Gulf, are of ſuch ſmall bulk as to bear the expence of a long land-carriage, this trade ſoon became ſo conſiderable that the opulence and power of Palmyra increaſed rapidly. Its government was of the form which is beſt ſuited to the genius of a commercial city, republican; and from the peculiar advantages of its ſituation, as well as the ſpirit of its inhabitants, it long maintained its independence, though ſurrounded by powerful and ambitious neighbours.

[c] 1 Kings, ix. 18. 2 Chron. viii. 4.

[d] In a former edition, I ſtated the diſtance of Palmyra from the Euphrates at ſixty miles, and from the Mediterranean at two hundred and three miles. Into theſe errors I was led by M. D'Anville, who, in his Memoire ſur l'Euphrate et le Tigris, a work publiſhed in old age, did not retain his wonted accuracy. From information communicated by Major Rennell, I have ſubſtituted the true diſtances.

furnifhed the chief part, and its productions were allowed to be moft abundant, diverfified, and valuable.

III. Another production of India in great demand at Rome, was filk; and when we recollect the variety of elegant fabrics into which it may be formed, and how much thefe have added to the fplendour of drefs and furniture, we cannot wonder at its being held in fuch eftimation by luxurious people. The price it bore was exorbitant; but it was deemed a drefs too expenfive and too delicate for men[u], and was appropriated wholly to women of eminent rank and opulence. This, however, did not render the demand for it lefs eager, efpecially after the example of the diffolute Elagabalus introduced the ufe of it among the other fex, and accuftomed men to the difgrace (as the feverity of ancient ideas accounted it) of wearing this effeminate garb. Two circumftances concerning the traffic of filk among the Romans merit obfervation. Contrary to what ufually takes place in the operations of trade, the more general ufe of that commodity feems not to have increafed the quantity imported, in fuch proportion as to anfwer the growing demand for it, and the price of filk was not reduced during the courfe of two hundred and fifty years from the time of its being firft known in Rome. In the reign of Aurelian, it ftill continued to be valued at its weight in gold. This, it is probable, was owing to the mode in

[u] Tacit. Annal. lib. ii. c. 33.

which

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which that commodity was procured by the merchants of Alexandria. They had no direct intercourſe with China, the only country in which the ſilk-worm was then reared, and its labour rendered an article of commerce. All the ſilk which they purchaſed in the different ports of India that they frequented, was brought thither in ſhips of the country; and either from ſome defect of ſkill in managing the ſilk-worm, the produce of its ingenious induſtry among the Chineſe was ſcanty, or the intermediate dealers found greater advantage in furniſhing the market of Alexandria with a ſmall quantity at an high price, than to lower its value by increaſing the quantity. The other circumſtance which I had in view is more extraordinary, and affords a ſtriking proof of the imperfect communication of the ancients with remote nations, and of the ſlender knowledge which they had of their natural productions or arts. Much as the manufactures of ſilk were admired, and often as ſilk is mentioned by the Greek and Roman authors, they had not, for ſeveral centuries, after the uſe of it became common, any certain knowledge either of the countries to which they were indebted for this favourite article of elegance, or of the manner in which it was produced. By ſome, ſilk was ſuppoſed to be a fine down adhering to the leaves of certain trees or flowers; others imagined it to be a delicate ſpecies of wool or cotton; and even thoſe who had learned that it was the work of an inſect, ſhew, by their deſcriptions, that they had no diſtinct idea of the manner in which

it was formed[x]. It was in consequence of an event that happened in the sixth century of the Christian æra, of which I shall hereafter take notice, that the real nature of silk became known in Europe.

The other commodities usually imported from India, will be mentioned in the account, which I now proceed to give, of the cargoes sent out and brought home in the ships employed in the trade with that country. For this we are indebted to the Circumnavigation of the Erythræan Sea, ascribed to Arrian, a curious though short treatise, less known than it deserves to be, and which enters into some details concerning commerce, to which there is nothing similar in any ancient writer. The first place in India, in which the ships from Egypt, while they followed the ancient course of navigation, were accustomed to trade, was Patala in the river Indus. They imported into it woollen cloth of a slight fabric, linen in chequer work, some precious stones, and some aromatics unknown in India, coral, storax, glass vessels of different kinds, some wrought silver, money, and wine. In return for these, they received spices of various kinds, sapphires, and other gems, silk stuffs, silk thread, cotton cloths[y], and black pepper. But a far more considerable emporium on the same coast was Barygaza, and on that account the author, whom I follow here, describes its situa-

[x] See NOTE XXIV. [y] See NOTE XXV.

tion

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tion and the mode of approaching it, with great minuteneſs and accuracy. Its ſituation correſponds entirely with that of Baroach, on the great river Nerbuddah, down the ſtream of which, or by land-carriage, from the great city of Tagara acroſs high mountains[z], all the productions of the interior country were conveyed to it. The articles of importation and exportation in this great mart were extenſive and various. Beſides theſe already mentioned, our author enumerates among the former, Italian, Greek, and Arabian wines, braſs, tin, lead, girdles or ſaſhes of curious texture, melilot, white glaſs, red arſenic, black lead, gold and ſilver coin. Among the exports he mentions the onyx, and other gems, ivory, myrrh, various fabrics of cotton, both plain and ornamented with flowers, and long pepper[a]. At Muſiris, the next emporium of note on that coaſt, the articles imported were much the ſame as at Barygaza; but as it lay nearer to the eaſtern parts of India, and ſeems to have had much communication with them, the commodities exported from it were more numerous and more valuable. He ſpecifies particularly pearls in great abundance and of extraordinary beauty, a variety of ſilk ſtuffs, rich perfumes, tortoiſe-ſhell, different kinds of tranſparent gems, eſpecially diamonds, and pepper in large quantities, and of the beſt quality[b].

[z] See NOTE XXVI.

[a] Peripl. Mar. Erythr. p. 28.

[b] Ibid. 31, 32.

THE

THE juſtneſs of the account given by this author of the articles imported from India, is confirmed by a Roman law, in which the Indian commodities ſubject to the payment of duties are enumerated[c]. By comparing theſe two accounts, we may form an idea tolerably exact of the nature and extent of the trade with India in ancient times.

As the ſtate of ſociety and manners among the natives of India, in the earlieſt period in which they are known, nearly reſembled what we obſerve among their deſcendants in the preſent age; their wants and demands were, of courſe, much the ſame. The ingenuity of their own artiſts was ſo able to ſupply theſe, that they ſtood little in need of foreign manufactures or productions, except ſome of the uſeful metals which their own country did not furniſh in ſufficient quantity; and then, as now, it was moſtly with gold and ſilver that the luxuries of the Eaſt were purchaſed. In two particulars, however, our importations from India differ greatly from thoſe of the ancients. The dreſs, both of the Greeks and Romans, was almoſt entirely woollen, which, by their frequent uſe of the warm bath, was rendered abundantly comfortable. Their conſumption of linen and cotton cloths was much inferior to that of modern times, when theſe are worn by perſons in every rank of life. Accordingly, a great branch of modern impor-

[c] Digeſt, lib. xxxix. tit. iv. § 16. De publicanis et vectigalibus.

tation

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In modern times, though it continues ſtill to be chiefly a commerce of luxury that is carried on with India, yet, together with the articles that miniſter to it, we import, to a conſiderable extent, various commodities which are to be conſidered merely as the materials of our domeſtic manufactures. Such are, the cotton-wool of Indoſtan, the ſilk of China, and the ſaltpetre of Bengal. But, in the accounts of ancient importations from India, raw ſilk and ſilk-thread excepted, I find nothing mentioned that could ſerve as the materials of any home-manufacture. The navigation of the ancients never having extended to China, the quantity of unwrought ſilk with which they were ſupplied, by means of the Indian traders, appears to have been ſo ſcanty, that the manufacture of it could not make an addition of any moment to their domeſtic induſtry.

After this ſuccinct account of the commerce carried on by the ancients in India, I proceed to inquire what knowledge they had of the countries beyond

beyond the ports of Mufiris and Barace, the utmoft boundary towards the Eaft to which I have hitherto traced their progrefs. The author of the Circumnavigation of the Erythræan Sea, whofe accuracy of defcription juftifies the confidence with which I have followed him for fome time, feems to have been little acquainted with that part of the coaft which ftretches from Barace towards the fouth. He mentions, indeed curforily, two or three different ports, but gives no intimation that any of them were ftaples of the commerce with Egypt. He haftens to Comar, or Cape Comorin, the fouthernmoft point of the Indian peninfula; and his defcription of it is fo accurate, and fo conformable to its real ftate, as fhews his information concerning it to have been perfectly authentic[d]. Near to this he places the pearl fifhery of Colchos, the modern Kilkare, undoubtedly the fame with that now carried on by the Dutch in the ftreight which feparates the ifland of Ceylon from the continent; as adjacent to this he mentions three different ports, which appear to have been fituated on the eaft fide of the peninfula, now known by the name of the Coromandel coaft. He defcribes thefe as *emporia*, or ftations of trade[e]; but from an attentive confideration of fome circumftances in his account of them, I think it probable that the fhips from Berenice did not fail to any of thefe ports, though they were fupplied, as he in-

[d] Peripl. p. 33. D'Anville Ant. de l'Inde, 118, &c.

[e] Peripl. p. 34.

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forms us, with the commodities brought from Egypt, as well as with the productions of the opposite coast of the peninsula; but these seem to have been imported in *country ships*[f]. It was likewise in vessels of their own, varying in form and burden, and distinguished by different names, some of which he mentions, that they traded with the Golden Chersonesus, or kingdom of Malacca, and the countries near the Ganges. Not far from the mouth of that river he places an island, which he describes as situated under the rising sun, and as the last region in the East that was inhabited[g]. Of all these parts of India, the Author of the Circumnavigation appears to have had very slender knowledge, as is manifest, not only from what he mentions concerning this imaginary island, and from his not attempting to describe them, but from his relating, with the credulity and love of the marvellous, which always accompany and characterise ignorance, that these remote regions were peopled with cannibals, and men of uncouth and monstrous forms[h].

I HAVE been induced to bestow this attention in tracing the course delineated in the Circumnavigation of the Erythræan Sea, because the Author of it is the first ancient writer to whom we are indebted for any knowledge of the eastern coast of the great peninsula of India, or of the countries which lie beyond it. To Strabo, who

[f] τοπικὰ πλοῖα.
[g] Peripl. p. 36.
[h] Peripl. p. 35.

composed

compoſed his great work on geography in the reign of Auguſtus, India, particularly the moſt eaſtern parts of it, was little known. He begins his deſcription of it with requeſting the indulgence of his readers, on account of the ſcanty information he could obtain with reſpect to a country ſo remote, which Europeans had ſeldom viſited, and many of them tranſiently only, in the functions of military ſervice. He obſerves, that even commerce had contributed little towards an accurate inveſtigation of the country, as few of the merchants from Egypt, and the Arabian Gulf, had ever ſailed as far as the Ganges; and from men ſo illiterate, intelligence that merited a full degree of confidence could ſcarcely be expected. His deſcriptions of India, particularly its interior provinces, are borrowed almoſt entirely from the memoirs of Alexander's officers, with ſome ſlender additions from more recent accounts, and theſe ſo few in number, and ſometimes ſo inaccurate, as to furniſh a ſtriking proof of the ſmall progreſs which the ancients had made from the time of Alexander, in exploring that country. When an author, poſſeſſed of ſuch diſcernment and induſtry as Strabo, who viſited in perſon ſeveral diſtant regions, that he might be able to deſcribe them with greater accuracy, relates, that the Ganges enters the ocean by one mouth[1], we are warranted in concluding, that in his time there was either no direct navigation carried on to that great river, by the traders from the Arabian

[1] Strabo, lib. xv. 1011. C.

 Gulf,

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Gulf, or that this voyage was undertaken ſo ſeldom, that ſcience had not then derived much information from it.

The next author, in order of time, from whom we receive any account of India, is the elder Pliny, who flouriſhed about fifty years later than Strabo. As in the ſhort deſcription of India, given in his Natural Hiſtory, he follows the ſame guides with Strabo, and ſeems to have had no knowledge of the interior country, but what he derived from the memoirs of the officers who ſerved under Alexander and his immediate ſucceſſors, it is unneceſſary to examine his deſcription minutely. He has added, however, two valuable articles, for which he was indebted to more recent diſcoveries. The one is the account of the new courſe of navigation from the Arabian Gulf to the coaſt of Malabar, the nature and importance of which I have already explained. The other is a deſcription of the iſland of Taprobana, which I ſhall conſider particularly, after inquiring into what Ptolemy has contributed towards our knowledge of the ancient ſtate of the Indian continent.

Though Ptolemy, who publiſhed his works about fourſcore years after Pliny, ſeems to have been diſtinguiſhed for his perſevering induſtry, and talent for arrangement, rather than for an inventive genius; geography has been more indebted to him for its improvement, than to any other philoſopher. Fortunately for that ſcience, in

in forming his general ſyſtem of geography, he adopted the ideas, and imitated the practice of Hipparchus, who lived near four hundred years before his time. That great philoſopher was the firſt who attempted to make a catalogue of the ſtars. In order to aſcertain their poſition in the heavens with accuracy, he meaſured their diſtance from certain circles of the ſpheres, computing it by degrees, either from eaſt to weſt, or from north to ſouth. The former was denominated the longitude of the ſtar, the latter its latitude. This mode he found to be of ſuch utility in his aſtronomical reſearches, that he applied it with no leſs happy effect to geography; and it is a circumſtance worthy of notice, that it was by obſerving and deſcribing the heavens, men were firſt taught to meaſure and delineate the earth with exactneſs. This method of fixing the poſition of places, invented by Hipparchus, though known to the geographers between his time and that of Ptolemy, and mentioned both by Strabo [k] and by Pliny [l], was not employed by any of them. Of this neglect the moſt probable account ſeems to be, that as none of them were aſtronomers, they did not fully comprehend all the advantages geography might derive from this invention [m]. Theſe Ptolemy, who had devoted a long life to the improvement of aſtronomy, theoretical as well as practical, perfectly diſcerned, and, as in both Hipparchus was his guide, he, in his famous treatiſe on geography,

[k] Lib. ii. [l] Nat. Hiſt. lib. ii. c. 12. 26. 70.
[m] See NOTE XXVII.

 deſcribed

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described the different parts of the earth according to their longitude and latitude. Geography was thus established upon its proper principles, and intimately connected with astronomical observations and mathematical science. This work of Ptolemy soon rose high in estimation among the ancients[n]. During the middle ages, both in Arabia and in Europe, the decisions of Ptolemy, in every thing relating to geography, were submitted to with an assent as implicit as was yielded to those of Aristotle in all other departments of science. On the revival of a more liberal spirit of inquiry in the sixteenth century, the merit of Ptolemy's improvements in geography was examined and recognized; that scientific language which he first rendered general, continues to be used, and the position of places is still ascertained in the same distinct and compendious manner, by specifying their longitude and latitude.

Not satisfied with adopting the general principles of Hipparchus, Ptolemy emulated him in the application of them; and, as that philosopher had arranged all the constellations, he ventured upon what was no less arduous, to survey all the regions of the earth which were then known, and with minute and bold decision he fixed the longitude and latitude of the most remarkable places in each of them. All his determinations, however, are not to be considered as the result

[n] See NOTE XXVIII.

of

of actual obſervation, nor did Ptolemy publiſh them as ſuch. Aſtronomical ſcience was confined, at that time, to a few countries. A conſiderable part of the globe was little viſited, and imperfectly deſcribed. The poſition of a ſmall number of places only had been fixed with any degree of accuracy. Ptolemy was therefore obliged to conſult the itineraries and ſurveys of the Roman empire, which the political wiſdom of that great ſtate had completed with immenſe labour and expenſe[o]. Beyond the precincts of the empire, he had nothing on which he could rely, but the journals and reports of travellers. Upon theſe all his concluſions were founded; and as he reſided in Alexandria at a time when the trade from that city to India was carried on to its utmoſt extent, this ſituation might have been expected to afford him the means of procuring ample information concerning it. But either from the imperfect manner in which that country was explored in his time, or from his placing too much confidence in the reports of perſons who had viſited it with little attention or diſcernment[p], his general delineation of the form of the Indian continent is the moſt erroneous that has been tranſmitted to us from antiquity. By an aſtoniſhing miſtake, he has made the peninſula of India ſtretch from the Sinus Barygazenus, or Gulf of Cambay, from weſt to eaſt, inſtead of extending, according to its real direction, from north to ſouth[q]. This error will

[o] See NOTE XXIX.

[p] Geogr. lib. i. c. 17.

[q] See NOTE XXX.

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appear the more unaccountable, when we recollect that Megasthenes had published a measurement of the Indian peninsula, which approaches near to its true dimensions; and that this had been adopted, with some variations, by Eratosthenes, Strabo, Diodorus Siculus, and Pliny, who wrote prior to the age of Ptolemy[r].

Although Ptolemy was led to form such an erroneous opinion concerning the general dimensions of the Indian continent, his information with respect to the country in detail, and the situation of particular places, was more accurate; and he is the first author possessed of such knowledge as enabled him to trace the sea-coast, to mention the most noted places situated upon it, and to specify the longitude and latitude of each from Cape Comorin eastward, to the utmost boundary of ancient navigation. With regard to some districts, particularly along the east side of the peninsula as far as the mouth of the Ganges, the accounts which he had received seem to have been so far exact, as to correspond more nearly perhaps with the actual state of the country, than the descriptions which he gives of any other part of India. M. D'Anville, with his usual industry and discernment, has considered the principal stations as they are fixed by him, and finds that

[r] Strabo, lib. xv. 1010. B. Arrian, Hist. Indie, c. 3, 4. Diod. Sicul. lib. ii. 148. Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. vi. c. 21. See NOTE XXXI.

they

they correſpond to Kilkare, Negapatam, the mouth of the river Cauveri, Maſulipatam, Point Gordeware, &c. It is foreign to the object of this Diſquiſition to enter into ſuch a minute detail; but in ſeveral inſtances we may obſerve, that not only the conformity of poſition, but the ſimilarity of ancient and modern names, is very ſtriking. The great river Cauveri, is by Ptolemy named Chaberis; Arcot, in the interior country, is Arcati Regia; and probably the whole coaſt has received its preſent name of Coromandel from *Sor Mandulam*, or the kingdom of Soræ, which is ſituated upon it[s].

In the courſe of one hundred and thirty-ſix years, which elapſed from the death of Strabo to that of Ptolemy, the commercial intercourſe with India was greatly extended; the latter geographer had acquired ſuch an acceſſion of new information concerning the Ganges, that he mentions the names of ſix different mouths of that river, and deſcribes their poſitions. His delineation, however, of that part of India which lies beyond the Ganges, is not leſs erroneous in its general form, than that which he gave of the peninſula, and bears as little reſemblance to the actual poſition of thoſe countries. He ventures, nevertheleſs, upon a ſurvey of them, ſimilar to that which he had made of the other great diviſion of India, which I have already examined.

[s] Ptolm. Geogr. lib. vii. c. 1. D'Anville, Antiq. de l'Inde, 127, &c.

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He mentions the places of note along the coaſt, ſome of which he diſtinguiſhes as *emporia*; but whether that name was given to them on account of their being ſtaples of trade to the natives, in their traffic carried on from one diſtrict of India to another, or whether they were ports, to which veſſels from the Arabian Gulf reſorted directly, is not ſpecified. The latter I ſhould think to be the idea which Ptolemy means to convey; but thoſe regions of India were ſo remote, and, from the timid and ſlow courſe of ancient navigation, were probably ſo little frequented, that his information concerning them is extremely defective, and his deſcriptions more obſcure, more inaccurate, and leſs conformable to the real ſtate of the country, than in any part of his geography. That peninſula to which he gives the name of the Golden Cherſoneſus, he delineates as if it ſtretched directly from north to ſouth, and fixes the latitude of Sabana Emporium, its ſouthern extremity, three degrees beyond the line. To the eaſt of this peninſula he places what he calls the Great Bay, and in the moſt remote part of it the ſtation of Catigara, the utmoſt boundary of navigation in ancient times, to which he aſſigns no leſs than eight degrees and a half of ſouthern latitude. Beyond this he declares the earth to be altogether unknown, and aſſerts that the land turns thence to the weſtward, and ſtretches in that direction until it joins the promontory of Praſſum in Ethiopia, which, according to his idea, terminated the continent of Africa to the ſouth.

ſouth[t]. In conſequence of this error, no leſs unaccountable than enormous, he muſt have believed the Erythræan Sea, in its whole extent from the coaſt of Africa to that of Cambodia, to be a vaſt baſon, without any communication with the ocean[u].

Out of the confuſion of thoſe wild ideas, in which the accounts of ignorant or fabulous travellers have involved the geography of Ptolemy, M. D'Anville has attempted to bring order; and, with much ingenuity, he has formed opinions with reſpect to ſome capital poſitions, which have the appearance of being well founded. The peninſula of Malacca is, according to him, the Golden Cherſoneſus of Ptolemy; but inſtead of the direction which he has given it, we know that it bends ſome degrees towards the eaſt, and that Cape de Romania, its ſouthern extremity, is more than a degree to the north of the line. The Gulf of Siam he conſiders as the Great Bay of Ptolemy, but the poſition on the eaſt ſide of that bay, correſponding to Catigara, is actually as many degrees to the north of the equator, as he ſuppoſed it to be ſouth of it. Beyond this he mentions an inland city, to which he gives the name of Thinæ or Sinæ Metropolis. The longitude which he aſſigns to it, is one hundred and eighty degrees from his firſt meridian in the For-

[t] Ptolem. Geogr. lib. vii. c. 3. 5. [t] D'Anville, Ant. de l'Inde, 187.

[u] See NOTE XXXII.

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tunate Iſland, and is the utmoſt point towards the eaſt to which the ancients had advanced by ſea. Its latitude he calculates to be three degrees ſouth of the line. If, with M. D'Anville, we conclude the ſituation of Sin-hoa, in the weſtern part of the kingdom of Cochin-China, to be the ſame with Sinæ Metropolis, Ptolemy has erred in fixing its poſition no leſs than fifty degrees of longitude, and twenty degrees of latitude [x].

THESE errors of Ptolemy concerning the remote parts of Aſia, have been rendered more conſpicuous by a miſtaken opinion of modern times ingrafted upon them. Sinæ, the moſt diſtant ſtation mentioned in his geography, has ſuch a near reſemblance in ſound to China, the name by which the greateſt and moſt civilized empire in the Eaſt is known to Europeans, that, upon their firſt acquaintance with it, they haſtily concluded them to be the ſame; and of conſequence it was ſuppoſed that China was known to the ancients, though no point ſeems to be more aſcertained, than that they never advanced by ſea beyond that boundary which I have allotted to their navigation.

HAVING thus traced the diſcoveries of India which the ancients made by ſea, I ſhall next ex-

[x] Ptolem. Geogr. lib. vii. c. 3. D'Anville, Limites du Monde conudes Anciens au-dela du Gange. Mem. de Literat. xxxii. 604, &c. Ant. de l'Inde, Supplem. i. 161, &c. See NOTE XXXIII.

amine

amine what additional knowledge of that country they acquired from their progreſs by land. It appears (as I have formerly related) that there was a trade carried on early with India through the provinces that ſtretch along its northern frontier. Its various productions and manufactures were tranſported by land carriage into the interior parts of the Perſian dominions, or were conveyed, by means of the navigable rivers which flow through the Upper Aſia, to the Caſpian ſea, and from that to the Euxine. While the ſucceſſors of Seleucus retained the dominion of the Eaſt, this continued to be the mode of ſupplying their ſubjects with the commodities of India. When the Romans had extended their conqueſts ſo far that the Euphrates was the eaſtern limit of their empire, they found this trade ſtill eſtabliſhed, and as it opened to them a new communication with the Eaſt, by means of which they received an additional ſupply of luxuries for which they had acquired the higheſt reliſh, it became an object of their policy to protect and encourage it. As the progreſs of the caravans or companies of merchants, which travelled towards the countries whence they received the moſt valuable manufactures, particularly thoſe of ſilk, was often interrupted, and rendered dangerous by the Parthians, who had acquired poſſeſſion of all the provinces which extend from the Caſpian ſea to that part of Scythia or Tartary which borders on China, the Romans endeavoured to render this intercourſe more ſecure by a negociation with one of the monarchs

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of that great empire. Of this ſingular tranſaction there is, indeed, no veſtige in the Greek or Roman writers; our knowledge of it is derived entirely from the Chineſe hiſtorians, by whom we are informed that Antoun, (the Emperor Marcus Antonius,) the King of the people of the Weſtern Ocean, ſent an embaſſy with this view to Oun-ti, who reigned over China in the hundred and ſixty-ſixth year of the Chriſtian æra [7]. What was the ſucceſs of this attempt is not known, nor can we ſay whether it facilitated ſuch an intercourſe between theſe two remote nations as contributed towards the ſupply of their mutual wants. The deſign certainly was not unworthy of the enlightened Emperor of Rome to whom it is aſcribed.

It is evident, however, that in proſecuting this trade with China, a conſiderable part of the extenſive countries to the eaſt of the Caſpian ſea muſt have been traverſed; and though the chief inducement to undertake thoſe diſtant journies was gain, yet in the courſe of ages, there muſt have mingled among the adventurers, perſons of curioſity and abilities, who could turn their attention from commercial objects to thoſe of more general concern. From them ſuch information was procured, and ſubjected to ſcientific diſcuſſion, as enabled Ptolemy to give a deſcription of thoſe inland and remote

[7] Memoire ſur les Liaiſons et le Commerce des Romains, avec les Tartares et les Chinois, par M. de Guignes. Mem. de Literat. xxxii. 355, &c.

regions of Afia[z], fully as accurate as that of ſeveral countries, of which, from their vicinity, he may have been ſuppoſed to have received more diſtinct accounts. The fartheſt point towards the Eaſt, to which his knowledge of this part of Aſia extended, is Sera Metropolis, which from various circumſtances appears to have been in the ſame ſituation with Kant-cheou, a city of ſome note in Chen-ſi, the moſt weſterly province of the Chineſe empire. This he places in the longitude of one hundred and ſeventy-ſeven degrees fifteen minutes, near three degrees to the weſt of Sinæ Metropolis, which he had deſcribed as the utmoſt limit of Aſia diſcovered by ſea. Nor was Ptolemy's knowledge of this diſtrict of Aſia confined only to that part of it through which the caravans may be ſuppoſed to have proceeded directly in their route eaſtward; he had received likewiſe ſome general information concerning various nations towards the north, which, according to the poſition that he gives them, occupied parts of the great plain of Tartary, extending conſiderably beyond Laſſa, the capital of Thibet, and the reſidence of the Dalai Lama.

The latitudes of ſeveral places in this part of Aſia are fixed by Ptolemy with ſuch uncommon preciſion, that we can hardly doubt of their having been aſcertained by actual obſervation. Out of many inſtances of this, I ſhall ſelect three, of places ſituated in very different parts

[z] Lib. vi. c. 11—18.

of

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of the country under review. The latitude of Nagara, on the river Cophenes, (the modern Attock,) is, according to Ptolemy, thirty-two degrees and thirty minutes, which coincides precisely with the observation of an Eastern geographer quoted by M. D'Anville[a]. The latitude of Maracanda, or Samarcand, as fixed by him, is thirty-nine degrees fifteen minutes. According to the Astronomical Tables of Ulug Beg, the grandson of Timur, whose royal residence was in that city, it is thirty-nine degrees thirty-seven minutes[b]. The latitude of Sera Metropolis, in Ptolemy, is thirty-eight degrees fifteen minutes; that of Kant-cheou, as determined by the Jesuit Missionaries, is thirty-nine degrees. I have enumerated these striking examples of the coincidence of his calculations with those established by modern observations, for two reasons: One, because they clearly prove that these remote parts of Asia had been examined with some considerable degree of attention; the other because I feel great satisfaction, after having been obliged to mention several errors and defects in Ptolemy's geography, in rendering justice to a philosopher, who has contributed so much towards the improvement of that science. The facts which I have produced afford the strongest evidence of the extent of his information, as well as the justness of his conclusions concerning countries with which, from their remote situation, we might have supposed him to be least acquainted.

[a] Eclaircissements, &c. English Translation, p. 10.

[b] Tab. Geogr. ap. Hudson. Geogr. Minores, iii. 145.

HITHERTO

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HITHERTO I have confined my reſearches concerning the knowledge which the ancients had of India, to the continent; I return now to conſider the diſcoveries which they had made, of the iſlands ſituated in various parts of the ocean with which it is ſurrounded, and begin, as I propoſed, with Taprobane, the greateſt and moſt valuable of them. This iſland lay ſo directly in the courſe of navigators who ventured beyond Cape Comorin, eſpecially when, according to the ancient mode of ſailing, they ſeldom ventured far from the coaſt, that its poſition, one ſhould have thought, muſt have been determined with the utmoſt preciſion. There is, however, hardly any point in the geography of the ancients more undecided and uncertain. Prior to the age of Alexander the Great, the name of Taprobane was unknown in Europe, in conſequence of the active curioſity with which he explored every country that he ſubdued or viſited, ſome information concerning it ſeems to have been obtained. From his time almoſt every writer on geography has mentioned it, but their accounts of it are ſo various, and often ſo contradictory, that we can ſcarcely believe them to be deſcribing the ſame iſland. Strabo, the earlieſt writer now extant, from whom we have any particular account of it, affirms that it was as large as Britain, and ſituated at the diſtance of ſeven days, according to ſome reports, and according to other, of twenty days ſailing from the ſouthern extremity of the Indian peninſula; from which, contrary to what is known to be its real poſition, he de-

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ſcribes it as ſtretching towards the weſt above five hundred ſtadia [c]. Pomponious Mela, the author next in order of time, is uncertain whether he ſhould conſider Taprobane as an iſland, or as the beginning of another world; but as no perſon, he ſays, had ever ſailed round it, he ſeems to incline towards the latter opinion [d]. Pliny gives a more ample deſcription of Taprobane, which, inſtead of bringing any acceſſion of light, involves every thing relating to it in additional obſcurity. After enumerating the various and diſcordant opinions of the Greek writers, he informs us, that ambaſſadors were ſent by a King of that iſland to the Emperor Claudius, from whom the Romans learned ſeveral things concerning it, which were formerly unknown, particularly that there were five hundred towns in the iſland, and that in the centre of it there was a lake three hundred and ſeventy-five miles in circumference. Theſe ambaſſadors were aſtoniſhed at the ſight of the Great Bear and the Pleiades, being conſtellations which did not appear in their ſky; and were ſtill more amazed when they beheld their ſhadows point towards the north, and the ſun riſe on their left hand, and ſet on their right. They affirmed too, that in their country the moon was never ſeen until the eighth day after the change, and continued to be viſible only to the ſixteenth [e]. It is ſurpriſing to find an author ſo intelligent as Pliny relating

[c] Strabo, lib. ii. 124. B. 180. B. 192. A. lib. xv. 1012. B.
[d] De Situ Orbis, lib. iii. c. 7. [e] Nat. Hiſt. lib. vi. c. 22.

all

all these circumstances without animadversion, and particularly that he does not take notice, that what the ambassadors reported concerning the appearance of the moon, could not take place in any region of the earth.

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Ptolemy, though so near to the age of Pliny, seems to have been altogether unacquainted with his description of Taprobane, or with the embassy to the Emperor Claudius. He places that island opposite to Cape Comorin, at no great distance from the continent, and delineates it as stretching from north to south no less than fifteen degrees, two of which he supposes to be south of the equator; and if his representation of its dimensions had been just, it was well entitled from its magnitude to be compared with Britain[f]. Agathemerus, who wrote after Ptolemy, and was well acquainted with his geography, considers Taprobane as the largest of all islands, and assigns to Britain only the second place[g].

From this diversity of the descriptions given by ancient writers, it is not surprising that the moderns should have entertained very different sentiments with respect to the island in the Indian Ocean which was to be considered as the same with the Taprobane of the Greeks and Romans. As both Pliny and Ptolemy describe it as lying in part to the south of the equator, some learned men maintain Sumatra to be the island

[f] Ptol. lib. vii. c. 4. D'Anville, Ant. de l'Inde, p. 142.
[g] Lib. ii. c. 8. apud Hudson. Geogr. Minor. vol. ii.

 which

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which correſponds to this deſcription. But the great diſtance of Sumatra from the peninſula of India does not accord with any account which the Greek or Roman writers have given of the ſituation of Taprobane, and we have no evidence that the navigation of the ancients ever extended ſo far as Sumatra. The opinion more generally received is, that the Taprobane of the ancients is the iſland of Ceylon; and not only its vicinity to the continent of India, but the general form of the iſland, as delineated by Ptolemy, as well as the poſition of ſeveral places in it, mentioned by him, eſtabliſh this opinion (notwithſtanding ſome extraordinary miſtakes, of which I ſhall afterwards take notice) with a great degree of certainty.

The other iſlands to the eaſt of Taprobane, mentioned by Ptolemy, might be ſhewn (if ſuch a detail were neceſſary) to be the Andaman and Nicobar iſlands in the Gulf of Bengal.

After this long, and, I am afraid, tedious inveſtigation of the progreſs made by the ancients, in exploring the different parts of India, and after tracing them as far as they advanced towards the Eaſt either by ſea or land, I ſhall offer ſome general remarks concerning the mode in which their diſcoveries were conducted, and the degree of confidence with which we may rely on the accounts of them, which could not have been offered with the ſame advantage until this inveſtigation was finiſhed.

The

THE art of delineating maps, exhibiting either the figure of the whole earth, as far as it had been explored, or that of particular countries, was known to the ancients; and without the uſe of them to aſſiſt the imagination, it was impoſſible to have formed a diſtinct idea either of the one or of the other. Some of theſe maps are mentioned by Herodotus and other early Greek writers. But no maps prior to thoſe which were formed in order to illuſtrate the geography of Ptolemy, have reached our times, in conſequence of which it is very difficult to conceive what was the relative ſituation of the different places mentioned by the ancient geographers, unleſs when it is preciſely aſcertained by meaſurement[h]. As ſoon, however, as the mode of marking the ſituation of each place by ſpecifying its longitude and latitude was introduced, and came to be generally adopted, every poſition could be deſcribed in compendious and ſcientific terms. But ſtill the accuracy of this new method, and the improvement which geography derived from it, depends upon the mode in which the ancients eſtimated the latitude and longitude of places.

THOUGH the ancients proceeded in determining the latitude and longitude of places upon the ſame principles with the moderns, yet it was by means of inſtruments very inferior in their conſtruction to thoſe now uſed, and without the

[h] See NOTE XXXIV.

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ſame minute attention to every circumſtance that may affect the accuracy of an obſervation, an attention of which long experience only can demonſtrate the neceſſity. In order to aſcertain the latitude of any place, the ancients obſerved the meridian altitude of the ſun, either by means of the ſhadow of a perpendicular gnomon, or by means of an aſtrolabe, from which it was eaſy to compute how many degrees and minutes the place of obſervation was diſtant from the equator. When neither of theſe methods could be employed, they inferred the latitude of any place from the beſt accounts which they could procure of the length of its longeſt day.

With reſpect to determining the longitude of any place, they were much more at a loſs, as there was only one ſet of celeſtial phænomena to which they could have recourſe. Theſe were the eclipſes of the moon (for thoſe of the ſun were not then ſo well underſtood as to be ſubſervient to the purpoſes of geography): the difference between the time at which an eclipſe was obſerved to begin or to end at two different places, gave immediately the difference between the meridians of thoſe places. But the difficulty of making thoſe obſervations with accuracy, and the impoſſibility of repeating them often, rendered them of ſo little uſe in geography, that the ancients in determining longitudes were obliged, for the moſt part, to have recourſe to actual ſurveys, or to the vague information which

was

was to be obtained from the reckonings of ſailors, or the itineraries of travellers.

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But though the ancients, by means of the operations which I have mentioned, could determine the poſition of places with a conſiderable degree of accuracy at land, it is very uncertain whether or not they had any proper mode of determining this at ſea. The navigators of antiquity ſeem rarely to have had recourſe to aſtronomical obſervation. They had no inſtruments ſuited to a moveable and unſteady obſervatory; and though, by their practice of landing frequently, they might in ſome meaſure have ſupplied that defect, yet no ancient author, as far as I know, has given an account of any aſtronomical obſervation made by them during the courſe of their voyages. It ſeems to be evident from Ptolemy, who employs ſome chapters in ſhewing how geography may be improved and its errors may be rectified, from the reports of navigators[1], that all their calculations were founded ſolely upon reckoning, and were not the reſult of obſervation. Even after all the improvements which the moderns have made in the ſcience of navigation, this mode of computing by reckoning is known to be ſo looſe and uncertain, that, from it alone, no concluſion can be deduced with any great degree of preciſion. Among the ancients, this inaccuracy muſt have been greatly augmented, as they were accuſtomed in their voyages, inſtead of ſteering a

[1] Lib. i. c. 7—14.

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[k] See NOTE XXXV.

the longitude of any one, as he has done in fixing the latitude of the three cities which I formerly mentioned as a ſtriking, though not ſingular inſtance of his exactneſs.

THESE obſervations induce me to adhere to an opinion which I propoſed in another place[l], that the Greeks and Romans, in their commercial intercourſe with India, were ſeldom led, either by curioſity, or the love of gain, to viſit the more eaſtern parts of it. A variety of particulars occur to confirm this opinion. Though Ptolemy beſtows the appellation of *Emporia* on ſeveral places ſituated on the coaſt, which ſtretches from the eaſtern mouth of the Ganges to the extremity of the Golden Cherſoneſus, it is uncertain, whether from his having given them this name, we are to conſider them as harbours frequented by ſhips from Egypt, or merely by veſſels of the country. Beyond the Golden Cherſoneſus, it is remarkable that he mentions one *Emporium* only[m], which plainly indicates the intercourſe with this region of India to have been very inconſiderable. Had voyages from the Arabian Gulf to thoſe countries of India been as frequent as to have entitled Ptolemy to ſpecify ſo minutely the longitude and latitude of the great number of places which he mentions, he muſt, in conſequence of this, have acquired ſuch information as would have prevented ſeveral great errors into which he has fallen. Had it been uſual to

[l] Hiſt. of America, vol. i. p. 80. 315. [m] Lib. vii. c. 2.

double

SECT. II. double Cape Comorin, and to ſail up the Bay of Bengal to the mouth of the Ganges, ſome of the ancient geographers would not have been ſo uncertain, and others ſo widely miſtaken, with reſpect to the ſituation and magnitude of the iſland of Ceylon. If the merchants of Alexandria had often viſited the ports of the Golden Cherſoneſus, and of the Great Bay, Ptolemy's deſcriptions of them muſt have been rendered more correſpondent to their real form, nor could he have believed ſeveral places to lie beyond the line, which are in truth ſome degrees on this ſide of it.

But though the navigation of the ancients may not have extended to the farther India, we are certain that various commodities of that country were imported into Egypt, and thence were conveyed to Rome, and to other parts of the empire. From circumſtances which I have already enumerated, we are warranted in concluding, that theſe were brought in veſſels of the country to Muſiris, and to the other ports on the Malabar coaſt, which were, at that period, the ſtaples of trade with Egypt. In a country of ſuch extent as India, where the natural productions are various, and greatly diverſified by art and induſtry, an active domeſtic commerce, both by ſea and by land, muſt have early taken place among its different provinces. Of this we have ſome hints in ancient authors; and where the ſources of information are ſo few and ſo ſcanty, we muſt reſt ſatisfied with hints. Among the

the different classes or casts, into which the people of India were divided, merchants are mentioned as one[n], from which we may conclude trade to have been one of the established occupations of men in that country. From the Author of the Circumnavigation of the Erythræan Sea, we learn that the inhabitants of the Coromandel coast traded in vessels of their own with those of Malabar; that the interior trade of Barygaza was considerable; and that there was, at all seasons, a number of country ships to be found in the harbour of Musiris[o]. By Strabo we are informed, that the most valuable productions of Taprobane were carried to different *Emporia* of India[p]. In this way the traders from Egypt might be supplied with them, and thus could finish their voyages within the year, which must have been protracted much longer if they had extended as far towards the east as is generally supposed.

From all this it appears to be probable, that Ptolemy derived the information concerning the eastern parts of India, upon which he founds his calculations, not so much from any direct and regular intercourse between Egypt and these countries, as from the reports of a few adventurers, whom an enterprising spirit, or the love of gain, prompted to proceed beyond the usual limits of navigation.

n Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. vi. c. 22.
o Perip. Mar. Erythr. 34. 30.
p Lib. ii. 124. B.

Though,

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THOUGH, from the age of Ptolemy, the trade with India continued to be carried on in its former channel, and both Rome, the ancient capital of the empire, and Conſtantinople, the new ſeat of government, were ſupplied with the precious commodities of that country by the merchants of Alexandria, yet, until the reign of the Emperor Juſtinian, we have no new information concerning the intercourſe with the Eaſt by ſea, or the progreſs which was made in the diſcovery of its remote regions. Under Juſtinian, Coſmas, an Egyptian merchant, in the courſe of his traffick, made ſome voyages to India, whence he acquired the ſirname of Indicopleuſtes; but afterwards, by a tranſition not uncommon in that ſuperſtitious age, he renounced all the concerns of this life, and aſſumed the monaſtic character. In the ſolitude and leiſure of a cell, he compoſed ſeveral works, one of which, dignified by him with the name of *Chriſtian Topography*, has reached us. The main deſign of it is to combat the opinion of thoſe philoſophers, who aſſert the earth to be of a ſpherical figure, and to prove that it is an oblong plane, of twelve thouſand miles in length from eaſt to weſt, and of ſix thouſand miles in breadth from north to ſouth, ſurrounded by high walls, covered by the firmament as with a canopy or vault; that the viciſſitude of day and night was occaſioned by a mountain of prodigious height, ſituated in the extremities of the north, round which the ſun moved; that when it appeared on one ſide of this mountain, the earth was illuminated, when concealed on the other

other ſide, the earth was left involved in darkneſs[q]. But amidſt thoſe wild reveries, more ſuited to the credulity of his new profeſſion, than to the ſound ſenſe characteriſtic of that in which he was formerly engaged, Coſmas ſeems to relate what he himſelf had obſerved in his travels, or what he had learned from others, with great ſimplicity and regard for truth.

He appears to have been well acquainted with the weſt coaſt of the Indian Peninſula, and names ſeveral places ſituated upon it; he deſcribes it as the chief ſeat of the pepper trade, and mentions Male, in particular, as one of the moſt frequented ports on that account[r]. From Male, it is probable that this ſide of the continent has derived its modern name of Malabar; and the cluſter of iſlands contiguous to it, that of the Maldives. From him too we learn, that the iſland of Taprobane, which he ſuppoſes to lie at an equal diſtance from the Perſian Gulf on the weſt, and the country of the Sinæ, on the eaſt, had become, in conſequence of this commodious ſituation, a great ſtaple of trade; that into it were imported the ſilk of the Sinæ, and the precious ſpices of the eaſtern countries, which were conveyed thence to all parts of India, to Perſia, and to the Arabian Gulf. To this iſland he gives the name of Sieledibа[s], nearly the ſame with that of Se-

[q] Coſmas ap. Montfaucon Collect. Patrum, ii. 113, &c. 138.

[r] Coſm. lib. ii. p. 138. lib. xi. 337.

[s] Lib. xi. 337.

lendib,

SECT. II. lendib, or Serendib, by which it is ſtill known all over the Eaſt.

To Coſmas we are alſo indebted for the firſt information of a new rival to the Romans in trade having appeared in the Indian ſeas. The Perſians, after having overturned the empire of the Parthians, and re-eſtabliſhed the line of their ancient monarchs, ſeem to have ſurmounted entirely the averſion of their anceſtors to maritime exertion, and made early and vigorous efforts in order to acquire a ſhare in the lucrative commerce with India. All its conſiderable ports were frequented by traders from Perſia, who, in return for ſome productions of their own country in requeſt among the Indians, received the precious commodities, which they conveyed up the Perſian Gulf, and by means of the great rivers Euphrates and Tigris, diſtributed them through every province of their empire. As the voyage from Perſia to India, was much ſhorter than that from Egypt, and attended with leſs expence and danger, the intercourſe between the two countries increaſed rapidly. A circumſtance is mentioned by Coſmas which is a ſtriking proof of this. In moſt of the cities of any note in India he found Chriſtian churches eſtabliſhed, in which the functions of religion were performed by prieſts ordained by the Archbiſhop of Seleucia, the capital of the Perſian empire, and who continued ſubject to his juriſdiction[t]. India appears to have been more thoroughly exploded at this period,

[t] Coſm. lib. iii. 178.

than it was in the age of Ptolemy, and a greater number of ſtrangers ſeem to have been ſettled there. It is remarkable however, that, according to the account of Coſmas, none of theſe ſtrangers were accuſtomed to viſit the eaſtern regions of Aſia, but rested ſatisfied with receiving their ſilk, their ſpices, and other valuable productions, as they were imported into Ceylon, and conveyed thence to the various marts of India[u].

The frequency of open hoſtilities between the emperors of Conſtantinople and the monarchs of Perſia, together with the increaſing rivalſhip of their ſubjects in the trade with India, gave riſe to an event which produced a conſiderable change in the nature of that commerce. As the uſe of ſilk, both in dreſs and furniture, became gradually more general in the court of the Greek emperors, who imitated and ſurpaſſed the ſovereigns of Aſia in ſplendour and magnificence; and as China, in which, according to the concurring teſtimony of Oriental writers, the culture of ſilk was originally known[x], ſtill continued to be the only country which produced that valuable commodity: the Perſians, improving the advantages which their ſituation gave them over the merchants from the Arabian Gulf, ſupplanted them in all the marts of India to which ſilk was brought by ſea from the Eaſt. Having it likewiſe in their power to moleſt or to cut off the caravans, which, in order to procure a ſup-

[u] Lib. xi. 337. [x] Herbelot Biblioth. Orient. art. *Harir*.

ply

SECT. II. ply for the Greek empire, travelled by land to China, through the northern provinces of their kingdom, they entirely engrossed that branch of commerce. Constantinople was obliged to depend on the rival power for an article which luxury viewed and desired as essential to elegance. The Persians, with the usual rapacity of monopolists, raised the price of silk to such an exorbitant height[1], that Justinian, eager not only to obtain a full and certain supply of a commodity which was become of indispensible use, but solicitous to deliver the commerce of the subjects from the exactions of his enemies, endeavoured, by means of his ally, the Christian monarch of Abyssinia, to wrest some portion of the silk trade from the Persians. In this attempt he failed; but when he
A. D. 55. least expected it, he, by an unforeseen event, attained, in some measure, the object which he had in view. Two Persian monks having been employed as missionaries in some of the Christian churches, which were established, (as we are informed by Cosmas,) in different parts of India, had penetrated into the country of the Seres or China. There they observed the labours of the silk-worm, and became acquainted with all the arts of man in working up its productions into such a variety of elegant fabrics. The prospect of gain, or perhaps an indignant zeal, excited by seeing this lucrative branch of commerce engrossed by unbelieving nations, prompted them to repair to Constantinople. There they ex-

[1] Procop. Hist. Arcan. c. 25.

plained

plained to the Emperor the origin of ſilk, as well as the various modes of preparing and manufacturing it, myſteries hitherto unknown, or very imperfectly underſtood in Europe; and encouraged by his liberal promiſes, they undertook to bring to the capital a ſufficient number of thoſe wonderful inſects, to whoſe labours man is ſo much indebted. This they accompliſhed by conveying the eggs of the ſilk-worm in a hollow cane. They were hatched by the heat of a dunghill, fed with the leaves of a wild mulberry-tree, and they multiplied and worked in the ſame manner as in thoſe climates where they firſt became objects of human attention and care[z]. Vaſt numbers of theſe inſects were ſoon reared in different parts of Greece, particularly in the Peloponneſus. Sicily afterwards undertook to breed ſilk-worms with equal ſucceſs, and was imitated from time to time in ſeveral towns of Italy. In all theſe places extenſive manufactures were eſtabliſhed and carried on with ſilk of domeſtic production. The demand for ſilk from the Eaſt diminiſhed of courſe, the ſubjects of the Greek emperors were no longer obliged to have recourſe to the Perſians for a ſupply of it, and a conſiderable change took place in the nature of the commercial intercourſe between Europe and India[a].

[z] Procop. de Bello Gothic. lib. iv. c. 17.
[a] See NOTE XXXVI.

AN

HISTORICAL DISQUISITION

CONCERNING

ANCIENT INDIA.

SECTION III.

Intercourſe with India, from the Conqueſt of Egypt by the Mahomedans, to the Diſcovery of the Paſſage by the Cape of Good Hope, and the Eſtabliſhment of the Portugueſe Dominion in the Eaſt.

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ABOUT fourſcore years after the death of Juſtinian, an event happened, which occaſioned a revolution ſtill more conſiderable in the intercourſe of Europe with the Eaſt. Mahomet, by publiſhing a new religion, ſeems to have animated his countrymen with a new ſpirit, and to have called forth latent paſſions and talents into exertion. The greateſt part of the Arabians, ſatisfied from the earlieſt times with national independence and perſonal liberty, tended their camels, or reared their palm trees within the precincts

precincts of their own peninsula, and had little intercourse with the rest of mankind, unless when they sallied out to plunder a caravan, or to rob a traveller. In some districts, however, they had begun to add the labours of agriculture, and the business of commerce, to the occupations of pastoral life[a]. These different orders of men, when prompted by the enthusiastic ardour with which the exhortations and example of Mahomet inspired them, displayed at once, all the zeal of missionaries, and the ambition of conquerors. They spread the doctrine of their prophet, and extended the dominion of his successors, from the shores of the Atlantic to the frontier of China, with a rapidity of success to which there is nothing similar in the history of mankind. Egypt was one of their earliest conquests; and as they settled in that inviting country, and kept possession of it, the Greeks were excluded from all intercourse with Alexandria, to which they had long resorted as the chief mart of Indian goods. Nor was this the only effect which the progress of the Mahomedan arms had upon the commerce of Europe with India. Prior to their invasion of Egypt, the Arabians had subdued the great kingdom of Persia, and added to it the empire of their Caliphs. They found their new subjects engaged in prosecuting that extensive trade with India, and the country to the east of it, the commencement and progress of which in

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A. C. 1640.

[a] Sale's Koran. Prelim. Dis. p. 32, 33.

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Perſia I have already mentioned; and they were ſo ſenſible of the great advantages derived from it, that they became deſirous to partake of them. As the active powers of the human mind, when rouſed to vigorous exertions in one line, are moſt capable of operating with force in other directions; the Arabians, from impetuous warriors, ſoon became enterprifing merchants. They continued to carry on the trade with India in its former channel from the Perſian Gulf, but it was with that ardour which characteriſes all the early efforts of Mahomet's followers. In a ſhort time they advanced far beyond the boundaries of ancient navigation, and brought many of the moſt precious commodities of the Eaſt directly from the countries which produced them. In order to engroſs all the profit arifing from the ſale of them, the Caliph Omar[b], a few years after the conqueſt of Perſia, founded the city of Baſſora, on the weſtern banks of the great ſtream formed by the junction of the Euphrates and Tigris, with a view of ſecuring the command of theſe two rivers, by which goods imported from India were conveyed into all parts of Aſia. With ſuch diſcernment was the ſituation choſen, that Baſſora ſoon became a place of trade hardly inferior to Alexandria.

THIS general information with reſpect to the trade of the Arabians with India, which is all

[b] Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. artic. *Baſrah.* Abul. Pharaſ. Hiſt. Dynaſt. p. 113.

that

that can be derived from the hiſtorians of that period, is confirmed and illuſtrated by the Relation of a Voyage from the Perſian Gulf towards the Eaſt, written by an Arabian merchant in the year of the Chriſtian æra eight hundred and fifty-one, about two centuries after Perſia was ſubjected to the Caliphs, and explained by the Commentary of another Arabian, who had likewiſe viſited the Eaſtern parts of Aſia[c]. This curious Relation, which enables us to fill up a chaſm in the hiſtory of mercantile communication with India, furniſhes materials for deſcribing more in detail the extent of the Arabian diſcoveries in the Eaſt, and the manner in which they made them.

Though ſome have imagined that the wonderful property of the magnet, by which it communicates ſuch virtue to a needle or ſlender rod of iron, as to make it point towards the poles of the earth, was known in the Eaſt long before it was obſerved in Europe, it is manifeſt both from the Relation of the Mahomedan merchant, and from much concurring evidence, that not only the Arabians, but the Chineſe, were deſtitute of this faithful guide, and that their mode of Navigation was not more adventurous than that of the Greeks and Romans[d]. They ſteered ſervilely along the coaſt, ſeldom ſtretching out to ſea ſo far as to loſe ſight of land, and

[c] See NOTE XXXVII.

[d] Relation, p. 2. 8, &c.

SECT. III. as they ſhaped their courſe in this timid manner, their mode of reckoning was defective, and liable to the ſame errors which I obſerved in that of the Greeks and Romans[e].

NOTWITHSTANDING theſe diſadvantages, the progreſs of the Arabians towards the Eaſt extended far beyond the Gulf of Siam, the boundary of European navigation. They became acquainted with Sumatra, and the other iſlands of the great Indian Archipelago, and advanced as far as the city of Canton in China. Nor are theſe diſcoveries to be conſidered as the effect of the enterpriſing curioſity of individuals; they were owing to a regular commerce carried on from the Perſian Gulf with China, and all the intermediate countries. Many Mahomedans, imitating the example of the Perſians deſcribed by Coſmas Indicopleuſtes, ſettled in India and the countries beyond it. They were ſo numerous in the city of Canton, that the Emperor (as the Arabian authors relate) permitted them to have a Cadi or judge of their own ſect, who decided controverſies among his countrymen by their own laws, and preſided in all the functions of religion[f]. In other places proſelytes were gained to the Mahomedan faith, and the Arabian language was underſtood and ſpoken in almoſt every

[e] Renaudot. Inquiry into the Time when the Mahomedans firſt entered China, p. 143.

[f] Relation, 7. Remarks, p. 19. Inquiry, p. 171, &c.

ſea,

ſea-port of any note. Ships from China and different places of India traded in the Perſian Gulf[g], and by the frequency of mutual intercourſe, all the nations of the Eaſt became better acquainted with each other[h].

A STRIKING proof of this is the new information concerning China and India we receive from the two authors I have mentioned. They point out the ſituation of Canton, now ſo well known to Europeans, with a conſiderable degree of exactneſs. They take notice of the general uſe of ſilk among the Chineſe. They are the firſt who mention their celebrated manufacture of porcelain, which, on account of its delicacy and tranſparency, they compare to glaſs[i]. They deſcribe the tea-tree, and the mode of uſing its leaves; and from the great revenue which was levied (as they inform us) from the conſumption of it, tea ſeems to have been as univerſally the favourite beverage of the Chineſe in the ninth century, as it is at preſent[k].

EVEN with reſpect to thoſe parts of India which the Greeks and Romans were accuſtomed to viſit, the Arabians had acquired more perfect information. They mention a great empire eſtabliſhed on the Malabar coaſt, governed by monarchs whoſe authority was paramount to that

[g] See NOTE XXXVIII.
[h] Relation, p. 8.
[i] See NOTE XXXIX.
[k] Relation, p. 21. 25.

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of every power in India. Thefe monarchs were diftinguifhed by the appellation of *Balchara*, a name yet known in India[l], and it is probable that the Samorin, or Emperor of Calicut, fo frequently mentioned in the accounts of the firft voyages of the Portuguefe to India, poffeffed fome portion of their dominions. They celebrate the extraordinary progrefs which the Indians had made in aftronomical knowledge, a circumftance which feems to have been little known to the Greeks and Romans, and affert that in this branch of fcience they were far fuperior to the moft enlightened nations of the Eaft, on which account their fovereign was denominated the King of Wifdom[m]. Other peculiarities in the political inftitutions, the mode of judicial proceedings, the paftimes and the fuperftitions of the Indians, particularly the excruciating mortifications and penances of the faquirs, might be produced as proofs of the fuperior knowledge which the Arabians had acquired of the manners of that people.

THE fame commercial fpirit or religious zeal, which prompted the Mahomedans of Perfia to vifit the remoteft regions of the Eaft, animated the Chriftians of that kingdom. The Neftorian churches planted in Perfia, under the protection firft of its native fovereigns, and afterwards of its conquerors

[l] Herbelot, artic. *Hend.* & *Belhar*.
[m] Relation, p. 37. 58.

the Caliphs, were numerous, and governed by respectable ecclesiastics. They had early sent missionaries into India, and established churches in different parts of it, particularly, as I have formerly related, in the Island of Ceylon. When the Arabians extended their navigation as far as China, a more ample field, both for their commerce and their zeal, opened to their view. If we may rely on the concurring evidence of Christian authors, in the East as well as in the West, confirmed by the testimony of the two Mahomedan travellers, their pious labours were attended with such success, that in the ninth and tenth centuries the number of Christians in India and China was very considerable[n]. As the churches in both these countries received all their ecclesiastics from Persia, where they were ordained by the *Catholicos*, or Nestorian Primate, whose supremacy they acknowledged, this became a regular channel of intercourse and intelligence; and to the combined effect of all these circumstances, we are indebted for the information we receive from the two Arabian writers[o], concerning those regions of Asia which the Greeks and Romans never visited.

But while both the Mahomedan and Christian subjects of the Caliphs continued to extend their knowledge of the East, the people of Europe found themselves excluded almost entirely from any intercourse with it. To them the great port

[n] See NOTE XL. [o] Relation, p. 39.

of

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of Alexandria was now ſhut, and the new lords of the Perſian Gulf, ſatisfied with ſupplying the demand for Indian commodities in their own extenſive dominions, neglected to convey them, by any of the uſual channels, to the trading towns on the Mediterranean. The opulent inhabitants of Conſtantinople, and other great cities of Europe, bore this deprivation of luxuries, to which they had been long accuſtomed, with ſuch impatience, that all the activity of commerce was exerted, in order to find a remedy for an evil which they deemed intolerable. The difficulties which were to be ſurmounted in order to accompliſh this, afford the moſt ſtriking proof of the high eſtimation in which the commodities of the Eaſt were held at that time. The ſilk of China was purchaſed in Chenſi, the weſternmoſt province of that empire, and conveyed thence by a caravan, in a march of eighty, or a hundred days, to the banks of the Oxus, where it was embarked, and carried down the ſtream of that river to the Caſpian. After a dangerous voyage acroſs that ſea, and aſcending the river Cyrus as far as it is navigable, it was conducted by a ſhort land-carriage of five days to the river Phaſis[p], which falls into the Euxine or Black Sea. Thence, by an eaſy and well known courſe, it was tranſported to Conſtantinople. The conveyance of commodities from that region of the Eaſt, now known by the name of Indoſtan, was ſomewhat leſs tedious and operoſe.

[p] Plin Nat Hiſt. lib. vi. c. 17.

They

They were carried from the banks of the Indus by a route early frequented, and which I have already defcribed, either to the river Oxus, or directly to the Cafpian, from which they held the fame courfe to Conftantinople.

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It is obvious, that only commodities of fmall bulk, and of confiderable value, could bear the expence of fuch a mode of conveyance; and in regulating the price of thofe commodities, not only the expence, but the rifk and danger of conveying them, were to be taken into account. In their journey acrofs the vaft plain extending from Samarcande to the frontier of China, caravans were expofed to the affaults and depredations of the Tartars, the Huns, the Turks, and other roving tribes which infeft the north-eaft of Afia, and which have always confidered the merchant and traveller as their lawful prey; nor were they exempt from infult and pillage in their journey from the Cyrus to the Phafis, through the kingdom of Colchis, a country noted, both in ancient and in modern times, for the thievifh difpofition of its inhabitants. Even under all thefe difadvantages, the trade with the Eaft was carried on with ardour. Conftantinople became a confiderable mart of Indian and Chinefe commodities, and the wealth which flowed into it in confequence of this, not only added to the fplendour of that great city, but feems to have retarded, for fome time, the decline of the empire of which it was the capital.

As

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As far as we may venture to conjecture, from the imperfect information of contemporary hiſtorians, it was chiefly by the mode of conveyance which I have deſcribed, perilous and operoſe as it was, that Europe was ſupplied with the commodities of the Eaſt, during more than two centuries. Throughout that period the Chriſtians and Mahomedans were engaged in almoſt uninterrupted hoſtilities; proſecuted with all the animoſity which rivalſhip for power, heightened by religious zeal, naturally excites. Under circumſtances which occaſioned ſuch alienation, commercial intercourſe could hardly ſubſiſt, and the merchants of Chriſtendom either did not reſort at all to Alexandria, and the ports of Syria, the ancient ſtaples for the commodities of the Eaſt, after they were in poſſeſſion of the Mahomedans, or if the love of gain, ſurmounting their abhorrence of the Infidels, prompted them to viſit the marts which they had long frequented, it was with much caution and diſtruſt.

While the difficulties of procuring the productions of the Eaſt were thus augmented, the people of Europe became more deſirous of obtaining them. About this time ſome cities of Italy, particularly Amalphi and Venice, having acquired a greater degree of ſecurity or independence than they formerly poſſeſſed, began to cultivate the arts of domeſtic induſtry, with an ardour and ingenuity uncommon in the middle ages.

ages. The effect of these exertions was such an increase of wealth, as created new wants and desires, and formed a taste for elegance and luxury, which induced them to visit foreign countries in order to gratify it. Among men in this stage of their advancement, the productions of India have always been held in high estimation, and from this period they were imported into Italy in larger quantities, and came into more general use. Several circumstances which indicate this revival of a commercial spirit, are collected by the industrious Muratori, and from the close of the seventh century, an attentive observer may discern faint traces of its progress[q].

Even in enlightened ages, when the transactions of nations are observed and recorded with the greatest care, and the store of historical materials seems to be abundantly ample, so little attention has been paid to the operations of commerce, that every attempt towards a regular deduction of them, has been found an undertaking of the utmost difficulty. The æra, however, to which I have conducted this Disquisition, is one of the periods in the annals of mankind concerning which history furnishes most scanty information. As it was chiefly in the Greek empire, and in some cities of Italy, that any efforts were made to procure the commodities of India, and the other regions of the East, it is only from the Hist-

[q] Antiquit. Ital. medij. Ævi, ii. 400. 408. 410. 883. 885. 894. Rer. Ital. Script. ii. 487. Histoire du Commerce de la Russie par M. Scherer. tom. i. p. 11, &c.

torians

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torians of thoſe countries we can expect to find any account of that trade. But from the age of Mahomet, until the time when the Comneni aſcended the throne of Conſtantinople, a period of more than four centuries and a half, the Byzantine hiſtory is contained in meagre chronicles, the compilers of which ſeldom extended their views beyond the intrigues in the palace, the factions in the theatre, or the diſputes of theologians. To them the monkiſh annaliſts of the different ſtates and cities of Italy, during the ſame period, are (if poſſible) far inferior in merit, and in the early accounts of thoſe cities which have been moſt celebrated for their commercial ſpirit, we ſearch with little ſucceſs for the origin or nature of that trade by which they firſt roſe to eminence[r]. It is manifeſt, however, from the ſlighteſt attention to the events which happened in the ſeventh and eighth centuries, that the Italian ſtates, while their coaſts were continually infeſted by the Mahomedans, who had made ſome ſettlements there, and had ſubjected Sicily almoſt entirely to their dominion, could not trade with much confidence and ſecurity in Egypt and Syria. With what implacable hatred Chriſtians viewed Mahomedans, as the diſciples of an impoſtor, is well known; and as all the nations which profeſſed the Chriſtian faith, both in the Eaſt and Weſt, had mingled the worſhip of angels and ſaints with that of the Supreme Being, and had adorned their churches with pic-

[r] See Note LXI.

tures

tures and ſtatues; the true Moſlems conſidered themſelves as the only aſſertors of the unity of God, and beheld Chriſtians of every denomination with abhorrence, as idolators. Much time was requiſite to ſoften this mutual animoſity, ſo far as to render intercourſe in any degree cordial.

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Meanwhile a taſte for the luxuries of the Eaſt continued not only to ſpread in Italy, but, from imitation of the Italians, or from ſome improvement in their own ſituation, the people of Marſeilles and other towns of France on the Mediterranean, became equally fond of them. But the profits exacted by the merchants of Amalphi or Venice, from whom they received thoſe precious commodities, were ſo exorbitant as prompted them to make ſome effort to ſupply their own demands. With this view, they not only opened a trade with Conſtantinople, but ventured at times to viſit the ports of Egypt and Syria[s]. This eagerneſs of the Europeans, on the one hand, to obtain the productions of India, and on the other hand, conſiderable advantages which both the Caliphs and their ſubjects derived from the ſale of them, induced both ſo far to conceal their reciprocal antipathy, as to carry on a traffic manifeſtly for their common benefit. How far this traffic extended, and in what mode it was conducted by theſe new adventurers, the ſcanty information which can be gathered from contemporary

[s] Mem. de Literat. tom. xxxvii. p. 467, &c. 483.

SECT. III. writers, does not enable me to trace with accuracy. It is probable, however, that this communication would have produced insensibly its usual effect, of familiarizing and reconciling men of hostile principles and discordant manners to one another, and a regular commerce might have been established gradually between Christians and Mahomedans, upon such equal terms, that the nations of Europe might have received all the luxuries of the East by the same channels in which they were formerly conveyed to them, first by the Tyrians, then by the Greeks of Alexandria, next by the Romans, and at last by the subjects of the Constantinopolitan empire.

But whatever might have been the influence of this growing correspondence, it was prevented from operating with full effect by the Crusades, or expeditions for the recovery of the Holy Land, which, during two centuries, occupied the professors of the two rival religions, and contributed to alienate them more than ever from each other. I have, in another work [t], contemplated mankind while under the dominion of this frenzy, the most singular perhaps, and the longest continued, of any that occurs in the history of our species; and I pointed out such effects of it upon government, upon property, upon manners and taste, as were suited to what were then the objects of my enquiry. At present my attention is confined to observe the commer-

[t] Hist. of Charles V. vol. i. p. 26. edit. 1787.

cial

cial consequences of the Crusades, and how far they contributed to retard or to promote the conveyance of Indian commodities into Europe.

SECT. III.

To fix an idea of peculiar sanctity to that country, which the Author of our Religion selected as the place of his residence while on earth, and in which he accomplished the redemption of mankind, is a sentiment so natural to the human mind, that, from the first establishment of Christianity, the visiting of the holy places in Judea was considered as an exercise of piety, tending powerfully to awaken and to cherish a spirit of devotion. Through succeeding ages, the practice continued and increased in every part of Christendom. When Jerusalem was subjected to the Mahomedan empire, and danger was added to the fatigue and expence of a distant pilgrimage, the undertaking was viewed as still more meritorious. It was sometimes enjoined as a penance to be performed by heinous transgressors. It was more frequently a duty undertaken with voluntary zeal, and in both cases it was deemed an expiation for all past offences. From various causes, which I have elsewhere enumerated [t], these pious visits to the Holy Land multiplied amazingly during the tenth and eleventh centuries. Not only individuals in the lower and middle ranks of life, but persons of superior condition, attended by large

[t] Hist. of Charles V. vol. 1. p. 27, 285.

 retinues,

SECT. III. retinues, and numerous caravans of opulent pilgrims, resorted to Jerusalem.

In all their operations, however, men have a wonderful dexterity in mingling some attention to interest with those functions which seem to be most purely spiritual. The Mahomedan caravans, which, in obedience to the injunctions of their religion, visit the holy temple of Mecca, are not composed, as I shall hereafter explain more fully, of devout pilgrims only, but of merchants, who, both in going and returning, are provided with such an assortment of goods, that they carry on a considerable traffic[u]. Even the Faquirs of India, whose wild enthusiasm seems to elevate them above all solicitude about the concerns of this world, have rendered their frequent pilgrimages subservient to their interest, by trading in every country through which they travel[x]. In like manner, it was not by devotion alone that such numerous bands of Christian pilgrims were induced to visit Jerusalem. To many of them commerce was the chief motive of undertaking that distant voyage, and by exchanging the productions of Europe for the more valuable commodities of Asia, particularly those of India, which at that time were diffused through every part of the Caliphs Dominions, they enriched themselves, and furnished their countrymen with such an additional

[u] Viagi di Ramusio, vol. i. p. 151, 152.
[x] See NOTE XLII.

supply

ſupply of Eaſtern luxuries, as augmented their relish for them [7]. SECT. III.

But how faint ſoever the lines may be, which, prior to the Cruſades, mark the influence of the frequent pilgrimages to the Eaſt upon commerce, they become ſo conſpicuous after the commencement of theſe expeditions, as to meet the eye of every obſerver. Various circumſtances concurred towards this, from an enumeration of which it will appear, that by attending to the progreſs and effects of the Cruſades, conſiderable light is thrown upon the ſubject of my inquiries. Great armies, conducted by the moſt illuſtrious princes and nobles of Europe, and compoſed of men of the moſt enterprising ſpirit in all the kingdoms of it, marched towards Paleſtine, through countries far advanced beyond thoſe which they left, in every ſpecies of improvement. They beheld the dawn of proſperity in the republics of Italy, which had begun to vie with each other in the arts of induſtry, and in their efforts to engroſs the lucrative commerce with the Eaſt. They next admired the more advanced ſtate of opulence and ſplendour in Conſtantinople, raiſed to a pre-eminence above all the cities then known, by its extenſive trade, particularly that which it carried on with India, and the countries beyond it. They afterwards ſerved in thoſe provinces of Aſia

[7] Gul. Tyr. lib. xvii. c. 4. p. 933. ap. Geſta Dei per Francos.

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through which the commodities of the Eaſt were uſually conveyed, and became maſters of ſeveral cities which had been ſtaples of that trade. They eſtabliſhed the kingdom of Jeruſalem, which ſubſiſted near two hundred years. They took poſſeſſion of the throne of the Greek empire, and governed it above half a century. Amidſt ſuch a variety of events and operations, the ideas of the fierce warriors of Europe gradually opened and improved; they became acquainted with the policy and arts of the people whom they ſubdued; they obſerved the ſources of their wealth, and availed themſelves of all this knowledge. Antioch and Tyre, when conquered by the Cruſaders, were flouriſhing cities, inhabited by opulent merchants, who ſupplied all the nations trading in the Mediterranean with the productions of the Eaſt [z], and as far as can be gathered from incidental occurrences, mentioned by the Hiſtorians of the Holy War, who, being moſtly prieſts and monks, had their attention directed to objects very different from thoſe relating to commerce, there is reaſon to believe that both in Conſtantinople while ſubject to the Franks, and in the ports of Syria acquired by the Chriſtians, the long-eſtabliſhed trade with the Eaſt continued to be protected and encouraged.

But though commerce may have been only a ſecondary object with the martial leaders of

[z] Gul. Tyr. lib. xiii. c. 5. Alb. Aquenſ. Hiſt. Hieroſ. ap. Geſta Dei, vol. i. p. 247.

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the Crusades, engaged in perpetual hostilities with the Turks on one hand, and with the Soldans of Egypt on the other, it was the primary object with the associates, in conjunction with whom they carried on their operations. Numerous as the armies were which assumed the cross, and enterprising as the fanatical zeal was with which they were animated, they could not have accomplished their purpose, or even have reached the seat of their warfare, without securing the assistance of the Italian states. None of the other European powers could either furnish a sufficient number of transports to convey the armies of the Crusaders to the coast of Dalmatia, whence they marched to Constantinople, the place of general rendezvous; or were able to supply them with military stores and provisions in such abundance as to enable them to invade a distant country. In all the successive expeditions, the fleets of the Genoese, of the Pisans, or of the Venetians, kept on the coast as the armies advanced by land, and supplying them from time to time with whatever was wanting, engrossed all the profits of a branch of commerce, which, in every age, has been extremely lucrative. It was with all the interested attention of merchants, that the Italians afforded their aid. On the reduction of any place in which they found it for their interest to settle, they obtained from the Crusaders valuable immunities of different kinds; freedom of trade; an abatement of the usual duties paid for what was imported and exported, or a total exemption

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from them; the property of entire ſuburbs in ſome cities, and of extenſive ſtreets in others; and a privilege granted to every perſon who reſided within their precincts, or who traded under their protection, of being tried by their own laws, and by judges of their own appointment[2]. In conſequence of ſo many advantages we can trace, during the progreſs of the Cruſades, a rapid increaſe of wealth and of power in all the commercial ſtates of Italy. Every port open to trade was frequented by their merchants, who, having now engroſſed entirely the commerce of the Eaſt, ſtrove with ſuch active emulation to find new markets for the commodities which it furniſhed, that they extended a taſte for them to many parts of Europe, in which they had hitherto been little known.

Two events happened, prior to the termination of the Holy War, which, by acquiring to the Venetians and Genoeſe the poſſeſſion of ſeveral provinces in the Greek empire, enabled them to ſupply Europe more abundantly with all the productions of the Eaſt. The firſt was the conqueſt of Conſtantinople in the year one thouſand two hundred and four, by the Venetians, and the leaders of the fourth Cruſade. An account of the political intereſts and intrigues which formed this alliance, and turned the hallowed arms deſtined to deliver the holy City from the

[2] Hiſt. of Charles V. vol. i. p. 34.

dominion

dominion of infidels, against a Christian monarch, is foreign from the design of this Disquisition. Constantinople was taken by storm, and plundered by the confederates. An Earl of Flanders was placed on the imperial throne. The dominions which still remained subject to the successors of Constantine, were divided into four parts, one of which being allotted to the new emperor, for supporting the dignity and expence of government, an equal partition of the other three was made between the Venetians, and the chiefs of the Crusade. The former, who, both in concerting and in conducting this enterprise, kept their eyes steadily fixed on what might be most for the emolument of their commerce, secured the territories of greatest value to a trading people. They obtained some part of the Peloponnesus, at that time the seat of flourishing manufactures, particularly of silk. They became masters of several of the largest and best cultivated islands in the Archipelago, and established a chain of settlements, partly military and partly commercial, extending from the Adriatic to the Bosphorus[b]. Many Venetians settled in Constantinople, and without obstruction from their warlike associates, little attentive to the arts of industry, they engrossed the various branches of trade which had so long enriched that capital. Two of these particularly attracted their attention; the silk trade,

[b] Danduli Chronic. ap. Murat. Script. Rer. Ital. vol. xii. p. 328. Mar. Sanuto Vite de Duchi di Venez. Murat. vol. xxii. p. 532.

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and that with India. From the reign of Juſtinian, it was moſtly in Greece, and ſome of the adjacent iſlands, that ſilk-worms, which he firſt introduced into Europe, were reared. The product of their labours was manufactured into ſtuffs of various kinds in many cities of the empire. But it was in Conſtantinople, the ſeat of opulence and luxury, that the demand for a commodity of ſuch high price was greateſt, and there, of conſequence, the commerce of ſilk naturally centered. In aſſorting cargoes for the ſeveral ports in which they traded, the Venetians had for ſome time found ſilk to be an eſſential article, as it continued to grow more and more into requeſt in every part of Europe. By the reſidence of ſo many of their citizens in Conſtantinople, and by the immunities granted to them, they not only procured ſilk in ſuch abundance, and on ſuch terms, as enabled them to carry on trade more extenſively, and with greater profit than formerly, but they became ſo thoroughly acquainted with every branch of the ſilk manufacture, as induced them to attempt the eſtabliſhment of it in their own dominions. The meaſures taken for this purpoſe by individuals, as well as the regulations framed by the ſtate, were concerted with ſo much prudence, and executed with ſuch ſucceſs, that in a ſhort time the ſilk fabrics of Venice vied with thoſe of Greece and Sicily, and contributed both to enrich the republic, and to enlarge the ſphere of its commerce. At the ſame time the Venetians availed themſelves of the influence which they had

had acquired in Conſtantinople, in order to improve their Indian trade. The capital of the Greek empire, beſides the means of being ſupplied with the productions of the Eaſt, which it enjoyed in common with the other commercial cities of Europe, received a conſiderable portion of them by a channel peculiar to itſelf. Some of the moſt valuable commodities of India and China were conveyed over land, by routes which I have deſcribed, to the Black Sea, and thence by a ſhort navigation to Conſtantinople. To this market, the beſt ſtored of any except Alexandria, the Venetians had now eaſy acceſs, and the goods which they purchaſed there, made an addition of great conſequence to what they were accuſtomed to acquire in the ports of Egypt and Syria. Thus while the Latin empire in Conſtantinople ſubſiſted, the Venetians poſſeſſed ſuch advantages over all their rivals, that their commerce extended greatly, and it was chiefly from them every part of Europe received the commodities of the Eaſt.

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The other event which I had in view, was the ſubverſion of the dominion of the Latins in Conſtantinople, and the re-eſtabliſhment of the Imperial family on the throne. This was effected after a period of fifty-ſeven years, partly by a tranſient effort of vigour, with which indignation at a foreign yoke animated the Greeks, and partly by the powerful aſſiſtance which they received from the republic of Genoa. The Genoeſe were

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SECT. III. so sensible of the advantages which the Venetians, their rivals in trade, derived from their union with the Latin emperors of Constantinople, that, in order to deprive them of these, they surmounted the most deep-rooted prejudices of their age, and combined with the schismatic Greeks to dethrone a monarch protected by the papal power, setting at defiance the thunders of the Vatican, which at that time made the greatest princes tremble. This undertaking, bold and impious as it was then deemed, proved successful. In recompence for their signal services, the gratitude or weakness of the Greek emperor, among other donations, bestowed upon the Genoese Pera, the chief suburb of Constantinople, to be held as a fief of the empire, together with such exemption from the accustomed duties on goods imported and exported, as gave them a decided superiority over every competitor in trade. With the vigilant attention of merchants, the Genoese availed themselves of this favourable situation. They surrounded their new settlement in Pera with fortifications. They rendered their factories on the adjacent coast places of strength[c]. They were masters of the harbour of Constantinople more than the Greeks themselves. The whole trade of the Black Sea came into their hands; and not satisfied with this, they took possession of part of the Chersonesus Taurica, the modern Crimea, and rendered Caffa, its principal

[c] Niceph. Gregor. lib. xi. c. 1. § 6. lib. xvii. c. 1. § 2.

town,

town, the chief ſeat of their trade with the Eaſt, and the port in which all its productions, conveyed to the Black Sea by the different routes I have formerly deſcribed, were landed [d]. SECT. III.

In conſequence of this revolution, Genoa became the greateſt commercial power in Europe; and if the enterpriſing induſtry and intrepid courage of its citizens had been under the direction of wiſe domeſtic policy, it might have long held that rank. But never was there a contraſt more ſtriking, than between the internal adminiſtration of the two rival republics of Venice and Genoa. In the former, government was conducted with ſteady ſyſtematic prudence; in the latter, it was conſiſtent in nothing but a fondneſs for novelty, and a propenſity to change: The one enjoyed a perpetual calm, the other was agitated with all the ſtorms and viciſſitudes of faction. The increaſe of wealth, which flowed into Genoa from the exertions of its merchants, did not counterbalance the defects in its political conſtitution; and even in its moſt proſperous ſtate we may diſcern the appearance of ſymptoms which foreboded a diminution of its opulence and power.

As long, however, as the Genoeſe retained the aſcendant which they had acquired in the Greek

[d] Folieta Hiſt. Genuenſ. ap. Græv. Theſ. Antiq. Ital. i. 387. De Marinis de Genuenſ. Dignit. ib. 1486. Niceph. Greg. lib. xiii. c. 12. Murat. Annal. d'Ital. ib. vii. c. 351. See NOTE XLIII.

empire,

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empire, the Venetians felt their commercial transactions with it to be carried on upon such unequal terms, that their merchants visited Constantinople seldom, and with reluctance; and in order to procure the commodities of the East in such quantities as were demanded in the various parts of Europe which they were accustomed to supply, they were obliged to resort to the ancient staples of that trade. Of these Alexandria was the chief, and the most abundantly supplied, as the conveyance of Indian goods by land through Asia, to any of the ports of the Mediterranean, was often rendered impracticable by the incursions of Turks, Tartars, and other hordes, which successively desolated that fertile country, or contended for the dominion of it. But under the military and vigorous government of the Soldans of the Mameluks, security and order were steadily maintained in Egypt, and trade, though loaded with heavy duties, was open to all. In proportion to the progress of the Genoese in engrossing the commerce of Constantinople and the Black Sea[e], the Venetians found it more and more necessary to enlarge their transactions with Alexandria.

But such an avowed intercourse with infidels being considered, in that age, as unbecoming the character of Christians, the senate of Venice, in order to silence its own scruples, or those of its subjects, had recourse to the infallible autho-

[e] See NOTE XLIV.

rity of the Pope, who was ſuppoſed to be poſſeſſed of power to diſpenſe with the rigorous obſervation of the moſt ſacred laws, and obtained permiſſion from him to fit out annually a ſpecified number of ſhips for the ports of Egypt and of Syria[f]. Under this ſanction the republic concluded a treaty of commerce with the Soldans of Egypt, on equitable terms; in conſequence of which the ſenate appointed one conſul to reſide in Alexandria, and another in Damaſcus, in a public character, and to exerciſe a mercantile juriſdiction, authoriſed by the Soldans. Under their protection, Venetian merchants and artiſans ſettled in each of theſe cities. Ancient prejudices and antipathies were forgotten, and their mutual intereſts eſtabliſhed, for the firſt time, a fair and open trade between Chriſtians and Mahomedans[g].

While the Venetians and Genoeſe were alternately making thoſe extraordinary efforts, in order to engroſs all the advantages of ſupplying Europe with the productions of the Eaſt, the republic of Florence, originally a commercial democracy, applied with ſuch perſevering vigour to trade, and the genius of the people, as well as the nature of their inſtitutions, were ſo favourable to its progreſs, that the ſtate advanced rapidly in power, and the people in opulence. But as the Florentines did not poſſeſs any commodious

[f] See NOTE XLV.

[g] Sandi Storia Civile Veneziana, lib. v. c. 15. p. 248, &c.

ſea-

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sea-port, their active exertions were directed chiefly towards the improvement of their manufactures, and domestic industry. About the beginning of the fourteenth century, the Florentine manufactures of various kinds, particularly those of silk and woollen cloth, appear from the enumeration of a well-informed Historian, to have been very considerable[h]. The connection which they formed in different parts of Europe, by furnishing them with the productions of their own industry, led them to engage in another branch of trade, that of banking. In this they soon became so eminent, that the money-transactions of almost every kingdom in Europe passed through their hands, and in many of them they were entrusted with the collection and administration of the public revenues. In consequence of the activity and success with which they conducted their manufactures and money-transactions, the former always attended with certain though moderate profit, the latter lucrative in an high degree, at a period when neither the interest of money, nor the premium on bills of exchange, were settled with accuracy, Florence became one of the first cities in Christendom, and many of its citizens extremely opulent. Cosmo di Medici, the head of a family which rose from obscurity by its success in trade, was reckoned the most wealthy merchant ever known in

[h] Giov. Villani Hist. Fiorent. ap. Murat. Script. Rer. Ital. vol. xiii. p. 823. Dell' Istorie Fiorentine, di Scip. Ammirato, lib. iv. p. 151. lib. viii. p. 299.

Europe;

Europe[i]; and in acts of public munificence, as well as of private generosity, in the patronage of learning, and in the encouragement of useful and elegant arts, no monarch of the age could vie with him. Whether the Medici, in their first mercantile transactions, carried on any commerce with the East, I have not been able to discover[k]. It is more probable, I should think, that their trade was confined to the same articles with that of their countrymen. But as soon as the common-wealth, by the conquest of Pisa, had acquired a communication with the ocean, Cosmo di Medici, who had the chief direction of its affairs, endeavoured to procure for his country a share in that lucrative commerce which had raised Venice and Genoa so far above all the other Italian states. With this view ambassadors were sent to Alexandria, in order to prevail with the Soldan to open that and the other ports of his dominions, to the subjects of the republic, and to admit them to a participation in all the commercial privileges which were enjoyed by the Venetians. The negociation terminated with such success, that the Florentines seem to have obtained some share in the Indian trade[l]; and soon after this period, we find spices enumerated among the commodities imported by the Florentines into England[m].

SECT. III.

A.C. 1405.

A.C. 1425.

[i] Fr. Mich. Brutus Hist. Flor. p. 37. 62. Chron. Eugubinum ap. Murat. Script. Rer. Ital. vol. xiv. p. 1007. Denina Revol. d'Italie, tom. vi. p. 263, &c.

[k] See NOTE XLVI. [l] See NOTE XLVII.

[m] Hakluyt, vol. i. p. 193.

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In ſome parts of this Diſquiſition, concerning the nature and courſe of trade with the Eaſt, I have been obliged to grope my way, and often under the guidance of very feeble lights. But as we are now approaching to the period when the modern ideas, with reſpect to the importance of commerce, began to unfold, and attention to its progreſs and effects became a more conſiderable object of policy, we may hope to carry on what reſearches yet remain to be made, with greater certainty and preciſion. To this growing attention we are indebted for the account which Marino Sanudo, a Venetian nobleman, gives of the Indian trade, as carried on by his countrymen, about the beginning of the fourteenth century. They were ſupplied, as he informs us, with the productions of the Eaſt in two different ways. Thoſe of ſmall bulk and high value, ſuch as cloves, nutmegs, mace, gems, pearls, &c. were conveyed from the Perſian Gulf up the Tigris to Baſſora, and thence to Bagdat, from which they were carried to ſome port on the Mediterranean. All more bulky goods, ſuch as pepper, ginger, cinnamon, &c. together with ſome portion of the more valuable articles, were conveyed by the ancient route to the Red Sea, and thence acroſs the deſart, and down the Nile, to Alexandria. The goods received by the former route were, as Sanudo obſerves, of ſuperior quality, but from the tedioufneſs and expence of a diſtant land-carriage, the ſupply was often ſcanty, nor can he conceal (though contrary to a favourite project which he had in view when he wrote the treatiſe to

which

which I refer) that, from the ſtate of the countries through which the caravans paſſed, this mode of conveyance was frequently precarious and attended with danger[n].

It was in Alexandria only that the Venetians found always a certain and full ſupply of Indian goods; and as theſe were conveyed thither chiefly by water-carriage, they might have purchaſed them at a moderate price, if the Soldans had not impoſed upon them duties which amounted to a third part of their full value. Under this and every other diſadvantage, however, it was neceſſary to procure them, as from many concurring circumſtances, particularly a more extenſive intercourſe eſtabliſhed among the different nations of Europe, the demand for them continued to increaſe greatly during the fourteenth century. By the irruptions of the various hoſtile tribes of Barbarians, who took poſſeſſion of the greater part of Europe, that powerful bond by which the Romans had united together all the people of their vaſt empire was entirely diſſolved, and ſuch diſcouragement was given to the communication of one nation with another, as would appear altogether incredible, if the evidence of it reſted wholly upon the teſtimony of hiſtorians, and were not confirmed by what is ſtill more authentic, the expreſs enactment of laws. Several ſtatutes of this kind, which diſ-

[n] Mar. Sanuti Secreta Fidelium Crucis, p. 22, &c. ap. Bongarſium.

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grace the jurisprudence of almost every European nation, I have enumerated and explained in another work[o]. But when the wants and desires of men multiplied, and they found that other countries could furnish the means of supplying and gratifying them, the hostile sentiments which kept nations at a distance from each other abated, and mutual correspondence gradually took place. From the time of the Crusades, which first brought people hardly known to one another, to associate, and to act in concert during two centuries, in pursuit of one common end, several circumstances had cooperated towards accelerating this general intercourse. The people around the Baltic, hitherto dreaded and abhorred by the rest of Europe as pirates and invaders, assumed more pacific manners, and began now to visit their neighbours as merchants. Occurrences foreign from the subject of the present inquiry, united them together in the powerful commercial confederacy so famous in the middle ages, under the name of the Hanseatic League, and led them to establish the staple of their trade with the southern parts of Europe in Bruges. Thither the merchants of Italy, particularly those of Venice, resorted; and in return for the productions of the East, and the manufactures of their own country, they received not only the naval stores and other commodities of the North, but a considerable supply of gold and silver from the mines in various pro-

[o] Hist. of Charles V. vol. i. p. 92. 291, &c.

vinces of Germany, the moſt valuable and productive of any known at that time in Europe[p]. Bruges continued to be the great mart or ſtore-houſe of European trade during the period to which my inquiries extend. A regular communication, formerly unknown, was kept up there among all the kingdoms into which our continent is divided, and we are enabled to account for the rapid progreſs of the Italian ſtates in wealth and power, by obſerving how much their trade, the ſource from which both were derived, muſt have augmented upon the vaſt increaſe in the conſumption of Aſiatic goods, when all the extenſive countries towards the north-eaſt of Europe were opened for their reception.

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During this proſperous and improving ſtate of Indian commerce, Venice received from one of its citizens ſuch new information concerning the countries which produced the precious commodities that formed the moſt valuable article of its trade, as gave an idea of their opulence, their population, and their extent, which roſe far above all the former conceptions of Europeans. From the time that the Mahomedans became maſters of Egypt, as no Chriſtian was permitted to paſs through their dominions to the Eaſt[q], the direct intercourſe of Europeans with India ceaſed entirely. The account of India by Coſmas Indicopleuſtes in the ſixth century, is, as far as I know, the laſt which the nations

[p] Zimmerman's Polit. Survey of Europe, p. 102.
[q] Sanuto, p. 23.

SECT. III. of the Weſt received from any perſon who had viſited that country. But about the middle of the thirteenth century, the ſpirit of commerce, now become more enterpriſing, and more eager to diſcover new routes which led to wealth, induced Marco Polo, a Venetian of a noble family, after trading for ſome time in many of the opulent cities of the Leſſer Aſia, to penetrate into the more eaſtern parts of that continent, as far as to the court of the Great Khan on the frontier of China. During the courſe of twenty-ſix years partly employed in mercantile tranſactions, and partly in conducting negociations with which the Great Khan entruſted him, he explored many regions of the Eaſt which no European had ever viſited.

He deſcribes the great kingdom of Cathay, the name by which China is ſtill known in many parts of the Eaſt[r], and travelled through it from Chambalu, or Peking, on its northern frontier, to ſome of its moſt ſouthern provinces. He viſited different parts of Indoſtan, and is the firſt who mentions Bengal and Guzzerat, by their preſent names, as great and opulent kingdoms. Beſides what he diſcovered on his journies by land, he made more than one voyage in the Indian ocean, and acquired ſome information concerning an iſland which he calls Zipangri or Cipango, probably Japan. He viſited in

[r] Herbelot Bib. Orient. artic. *Khathai*. Stewart, Account of Thibet, Phil. Tranſ. lxvii. 474. Voyage of A. Jinkinſon, Hakluyt. i. 333.

perſon

perſon Java, Sumatra, and ſeveral iſlands contiguous to them, the iſland of Ceylon, and the coaſt of Malabar, as far as the Gulf of Cambay, to all which he gives the names that they now bear. This was the moſt extenſive ſurvey hitherto made of the Eaſt, and the moſt complete deſcription of it ever given by any European; and, in an age which had hardly any knowledge of thoſe regions but what was derived from the geography of Ptolemy, not only the Venetians, but all the people of Europe, were aſtoniſhed at the diſcovery of immenſe countries open to their view beyond what had hitherto been reputed the utmoſt boundary of the earth in that quarter[*].

But while men of leiſure and ſpeculation occupied themſelves with examining the diſcoveries of Marco Polo, which gave riſe to conjectures and theories, productive of moſt important conſequences; an event happened, that drew the attention of all Europe, and had a moſt conſpicuous effect upon the courſe of that trade, the progreſs of which I am endeavouring to trace.

The event to which I allude, is the final conqueſt of the Greek empire by Mahomet II. and the eſtabliſhing the ſeat of the Turkiſh government in Conſtantinople. The immediate effect of this great revolution was, that the Genoeſe reſiding in Pera, involved in the general cala- A. D. 1453.

[*] See NOTE XLVIII.

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mity, were obliged not only to abandon that settlement, but all those which they had made on the adjacent sea-coast, after they had been in their possession near two centuries. Not long after, the victorious arms of the Sultan expelled them from Caffa, and every other place which they held in the Crimea [t]. Constantinople was no longer a mart open to the nations of the West for Indian commodities, and no supply of them could now be obtained but in Egypt and the ports of Syria, subject to the Soldans of the Mameluks. The Venetians, in consequence of the protection and privileges which they had secured by their commercial treaty with those powerful Princes, carried on trade in every part of their dominions with such advantage, as gave them a superiority over every competitor. Genoa, which had long been their most formidable rival, humbled by the loss of its possessions in the East, and weakened by domestic dissensions, declined so fast, that it was obliged to court foreign protection, and submitted alternately to the dominion of the Dukes of Milan and the Kings of France. In consequence of this diminution of their political power, the commercial exertions of the Genoese became less vigorous. A feeble attempt which they made to recover that share of the Indian trade which they had formerly enjoyed, by offering to enter into treaty with the Soldans of Egypt upon terms

A.D. 1474.

[t] Folieta Hist. Genu. 602. 626. Murat. Annali d'Ital. ix. 451.

similar

ſimilar to thoſe which had been granted to the Venetians, proved unſucceſsful; and during the remainder of the fifteenth century, Venice ſupplied the greater part of Europe with the productions of the Eaſt, and carried on trade to an extent far beyond what had been known in thoſe times.

The ſtate of the other European nations was extremely favourable to the commercial progreſs of the Venetians. England, deſolated by the civil wars which the unhappy conteſt between the houſes of York and Lancaſter excited, had hardly begun to turn its attention towards thoſe objects and purſuits to which it is indebted for its preſent opulence and power. In France, the fatal effects of the Engliſh arms and conqueſts were ſtill felt, and the King had neither acquired power, nor the people inclination, to direct the national genius and activity to the arts of peace. The union of the different kingdoms of Spain was not yet completed; ſome of its moſt fertile provinces were ſtill under the dominion of the Moors, with whom the Spaniſh monarchs waged perpetual war; and, except by the Catalans, little attention was paid to foreign trade. Portugal, though it had already entered upon that career of diſcovery which terminated with moſt ſplendid ſucceſs, had not yet made ſuch progreſs in it as to be entitled to any high rank among the commercial ſtates of Europe. Thus the Venetians, almoſt without rival or competitor, except from ſome of the inferior Italian ſtates, were

SECT. III. left at liberty to concert and to execute their mercantile plans; and their trade with the cities of the Hanſeatic League, which united the North and South of Europe, and which hitherto had been common to all the Italians, was now engroſſed, in a great meaſure, by them alone.

WHILE the increaſing demand for the productions of Aſia induced all the people of Europe to court intercourſe with the Venetians ſo eagerly, as to allure them, by various immunities, to frequent their ſea-ports, we may obſerve a peculiarity in their mode of carrying on trade with the Eaſt, which diſtinguiſhes it from what has taken place in other countries in any period of hiſtory. In the ancient world, the Tyrians, the Greeks who were maſters of Egypt, and the Romans, ſailed to India in queſt of thoſe commodities with which they ſupplied the people of the Weſt. In modern times, the ſame has been the practice of the Portugueſe, the Dutch, the Engliſh, and, after their example, of other European nations. In both periods loud complaints have been made, that in carrying on this trade every ſtate muſt be drained of the precious metals, which, in the courſe of it flow inceſſantly from the Weſt to the Eaſt, never to return. From whatever loſs might have been occaſioned by this gradual but unavoidable diminution of their gold and ſilver, (whether a real or only an imaginary loſs, it is not incumbent upon me in this place to enquire or to determine,) the Venetians were, in a great meaſure, exempted. They had no direct intercourſe with India.

India. They found in Egypt, or in Syria, warehouſes filled with all the commodities of the Eaſt, imported by the Mahomedans; and from the beſt accounts we have, with reſpect to the nature of their trade, they purchaſed them more frequently by barter, than with ready money. Egypt, the chief mart for Indian goods, though a moſt fertile country, is deſtitute of many things requiſite in an improved ſtate of ſociety, either for accommodation or for ornament. Too limited in extent, and too highly cultivated to afford ſpace for foreſts; too level to have mines of the uſeful metals; it muſt be ſupplied with timber for building, with iron, lead, tin, and braſs, by importation from other countries. The Egyptians, while under the dominion of the Mameluks, ſeem not themſelves to have traded in the ports of any Chriſtian ſtate, and it was principally from the Venetians, that they received all the articles which I have enumerated. Beſides theſe, the ingenuity of the Venetian artiſts furniſhed a variety of manufactures of woollen cloths, ſilk ſtuffs of various fabric, camblets, mirrors, arms, ornaments of gold and ſilver, glaſs, and many other articles, for all which they found a ready market in Egypt and Syria. In return they received from the merchants of Alexandria, ſpices of every kind, drugs, gems, pearls, ivory, cotton and ſilk, unwrought as well as manufactured, in many different forms, and other productions of the Eaſt, together with ſeveral valuable articles of Egyptian growth or fabric. In Aleppo, Baruth, and other cities, beſides the proper commodities of

India

SECT. III. India brought thither by land, they added to their cargoes the carpets of Perſia, the rich wrought ſilks of Damaſcus, ſtill known by the name taken from that city, and various productions of art and nature peculiar to Syria, Paleſtine, and Arabia. If, at any time, their demand for the productions of the Eaſt went beyond what they could procure in exchange for their own manufactures, that trade with the cities of the Hanſeatic League, which I have mentioned, furniſhed them from the mines of Germany, with a regular ſupply of gold and ſilver, which they could carry with advantage to the markets of Egypt and Syria.

From a propenſity, remarkable in all commercial ſtates, to ſubject the operations of trade to political regulation and reſtraint, the authority of the Venetian government ſeems to have been interpoſed, both in directing the importation of Aſiatic goods, and in the mode of circulating them among the different nations of Europe. To every conſiderable ſtaple in the Mediterranean a certain number of large veſſels, known by the name of *Galeons* or *Caracks*, was fitted out on the public account, and returned loaded with the richeſt merchandiſe [u], the profit ariſing from the ſale of which muſt have been no ſlender addition to the revenue of the republic. Citizens, however, of every claſs, particularly perſons of noble families, were encouraged to engage in fo-

[u] Sabellicus, Hiſt. Rer. Venet. Dec. iv. lib. iii. p. 868. Denina Revol. d'Italie, tom. vi. 340.

reign

reign trade, and whoever employed a veſſel of a certain burthen for this purpoſe, received a conſiderable bounty from the ſtate[x]. It was in the ſame manner, partly in ſhips belonging to the public, and partly in thoſe of private traders, that the Venetians circulated through Europe the goods imported from the Eaſt, as well as the produce of their own dominions and manufactures.

THERE are two different ways by which we may come at ſome knowledge of the magnitude of thoſe branches of commerce carried on by the Venetians. The one, by attending to the great variety and high value of the commodities which they imported into Bruges, the ſtore-houſe from which the more northern nations of Europe were ſupplied. A full enumeration of theſe is given by a well-informed author, in which is contained almoſt every article deemed in that age eſſential to accommodation or to elegance[y]. The other, by conſidering the effects of the Venetian trade upon the cities admitted to a participation of its advantages. Never did wealth appear more conſpicuouſly in the train of commerce. The citizens of Bruges, enriched by it, diſplayed in their dreſs, their buildings, and mode of living, ſuch magnificence as even to mortify the pride and excite the envy of royalty[z]. Antwerp, when the ſtaple was removed thither, ſoon rivalled Bruges

[x] Sandi Stor. Ciu. Venez. lib. viii. 891.
[y] Lud. Guicciardini Deſcript. de Paeſi Baſſi, p. 173.
[z] See NOTE XLIX.

in

SECT. III. in opulence and ſplendour. In ſome cities of Germany, particularly in Augſburg, the great mart for Indian commodities in the interior parts of that extenſive country, we meet with early examples of ſuch large fortunes accumulated by mercantile induſtry, as raiſed the proprietors of them to high rank and conſideration in the empire.

From obſerving this remarkable increaſe of opulence in all the places where the Venetians had an eſtabliſhed trade, we are led to conclude, that the profit accruing to themſelves from the different branches of it, eſpecially that with the Eaſt, muſt have been ſtill more conſiderable. It is impoſſible, however, without information much more minute than that to which we have acceſs, to form an eſtimate of this with accuracy; but various circumſtances may be produced to eſtabliſh, in general, the juſtneſs of this concluſion. From the firſt revival of a commercial ſpirit in Europe, the Venetians poſſeſſed a large ſhare of the trade with the Eaſt. It continued gradually to increaſe, and during a great part of the fifteenth century, they had nearly a monopoly of it. This was productive of conſequences attending all monopolies. Wherever there is no competition, and the merchant has it in his power to regulate the market, and to fix the price of the commodities which he vends, his gains will be exorbitant. Some idea of their magnitude, during ſeveral centuries, may be formed by attending to the rate of the premium or intereſt then paid for the uſe of money. This is undoubtedly the moſt exact

exact ſtandard by which to meaſure the profit ariſing from the capital ſtock employed in commerce; for, according as the intereſt of money is high or low, the gain acquired by the uſe of it muſt vary, and become exceſſive or moderate. From the cloſe of the eleventh century to the commencement of the ſixteenth, the period during which the Italians made their chief commercial exertions, the rate of intereſt was extremely high. It was uſually twenty per cent. ſometimes above that; and ſo late as the year one thouſand five hundred, it had not ſunk below ten or twelve per cent. in any part of Europe[a]. If the profits of a trade ſo extenſive as that of the Venetians correſponded to this high value of money, it could not fail of proving a ſource of great wealth, both public and private[b]. The condition of Venice, accordingly, during the period under review, is deſcribed by writers of that age, in terms which are not applicable to that of any other country in Europe. The revenues of the republic, as well as the wealth amaſſed by individuals, exceeded whatever was elſewhere known. In the magnificence of their houſes, in richneſs of furniture, in profuſion of plate, and in every thing which contributed either towards elegance or parade in their mode of living, the nobles of Venice ſurpaſſed the ſtate of the greateſt monarchs beyond the Alps. Nor was all this diſplay the effect of an oſtentatious and inconſiderate diſſipation, it was the natural conſe-

[a] Hiſt. of Charles V. vol. i. p. 401, &c.

[b] See NOTE L.

quence

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quence of ſucceſsful induſtry, which, having accumulated wealth with eaſe, is entitled to enjoy it in ſplendour[c].

NEVER did the Venetians believe the power of their country to be more firmly eſtabliſhed, or rely with greater confidence on the continuance and increaſe of its opulence, than towards the cloſe of the fifteenth century, when two events (which they could neither foreſee nor prevent) happened, that proved fatal to both. The one was the diſcovery of America. The other was the opening a direct courſe of navigation to the Eaſt Indies by the Cape of Good Hope. Of all occurrences in the hiſtory of the human race, theſe are undoubtedly among the moſt intereſting; and as they occaſioned a remarkable change of intercourſe among the different quarters of the globe, and finally eſtabliſhed thoſe commercial ideas and arrangements which conſtitute the chief diſtinction between the manners and policy of ancient and of modern times, an account of them is intimately connected with the ſubject of this Diſquiſition, and will bring it to that period which I have fixed upon for its boundary. But as I have related the riſe and progreſs of theſe diſcoveries at great length in another work[d], a rapid view of them is all that is requiſite in this place.

THE admiration or envy with which the other nations of Europe beheld the power and wealth

[c] See NOTE LI.
[d] Hiſt. of America, Books I. and II.

of

of Venice, led them naturally to enquire into the causes of this pre-eminence; and among these, its lucrative commerce with the East appeared to be by far the most considerable. Mortified with being excluded from a source of opulence, which to the Venetians had proved so abundant, different countries had attempted to acquire a share of the Indian trade. Some of the Italian states endeavoured to obtain admission into the ports of Egypt and Syria, upon the same terms with the Venetians; but either by the superior interest of the Venetians in the court of the Soldans, their negociations for that purpose were rendered unsuccessful; or from the manifold advantages which merchants, long in possession of any branch of trade, have in a competition with new adventurers, all their exertions did not produce effects of any consequence[e]. In other countries, various schemes were formed with the same view. As early as the year one thousand four hundred and eighty, the inventive and enterprising genius of Columbus conceived the idea of opening a shorter and more certain communication with India, by holding a direct westerly course towards those regions, which, according to Marco Polo and other travellers, extended eastward far beyond the utmost limits of Asia known to the Greeks or Romans. This scheme, supported by arguments deduced from a scientific acquaintance with cosmography, from his own practical knowledge of navigation, from the reports of skilful pilots, and from the theories and

[e] See NOTE LII.

con-

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But this was accompliſhed more ſpeedily, as well as more completely, by the other great event which I mentioned, the diſcovery of a new route of navigation to the Eaſt by the Cape of Good Hope. When

When the Portuguese, to whom mankind are indebted for opening this communication between the most remote parts of the habitable globe, undertook their first voyage of discovery, it is probable that they had nothing farther in view than to explore those parts of the coast of Africa which lay nearest to their own country. But a spirit of enterprise, when roused and put in motion, is always progressive; and that of the Portuguese, though slow and timid in its first operations, gradually acquired vigour, and prompted them to advance along the western shore of the African continent, far beyond the utmost boundary of ancient navigation in that direction. Encouraged by success, this spirit became more adventurous, despised dangers which formerly appalled it, and surmounted difficulties which it once deemed insuperable. When the Portuguese found in the torrid zone, which the ancients had pronounced to be uninhabitable, fertile countries, occupied by numerous nations, and perceived that the continent of Africa, instead of extending in breadth towards the west, according to the opinion of Ptolemy, appeared to contract itself and to bend eastwards, more extensive prospects opened to their view, and inspired them with hopes of reaching India, by continuing to hold the same course which they had so long pursued.

After several unsuccessful attempts to accomplish what they had in view, a small squadron sailed from the Tagus, under the command of Vasco de Gama, an officer of rank, whose abili-

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ties and courage fitted him to conduct the most difficult and arduous enterprises. From unacquaintance, however, with the proper season and route of navigation in that vast ocean through which he had to steer his course, his voyage was long and dangerous. At length he doubled that promontory, which for several years had been the object of terror and of hope to his countrymen. From that, after a prosperous navigation along the south-east of Africa, he arrived at the city of Melinda, and had the satisfaction of discovering there, as well as at other places where he touched, people of a race very different from the rude inhabitants of the western shore of that continent, which alone the Portuguese had hitherto visited. These he found to be so far advanced in civilization, and acquaintance with the various arts of life, that they carried on an active commerce, not only with the nations on their own coast, but with remote countries of Asia. Conducted by their pilots (who held a course with which experience had rendered them well acquainted) he sailed across the Indian ocean, and landed at Calecut, on the coast of Malabar, on the twenty-second of May, one thousand four hundred and ninety-eight, ten months and two days after his departure from the port of Lisbon.

THE Samorin, or monarch of the country, astonished at this unexpected visit of an unknown people, whose aspect, and arms, and manners, bore no resemblance to any of the nations accustomed to frequent his harbours, and

who arrived in his dominions by a route hitherto deemed impracticable, received them, at first, with that fond admiration which is often excited by novelty. But in a short time, as if he had been inspired with foresight of all the calamities now approaching India by this fatal communication opened with the inhabitants of Europe, he formed various schemes to cut off Gama and his followers. But from every danger to which he was exposed, either by the open attacks or secret machinations of the Indians, the Portuguese admiral extricated himself with singular prudence and intrepidity, and at last sailed from Calecut with his ships loaded, not only with the commodities peculiar to that coast, but with many of the rich productions of the eastern parts of India.

On his return to Lisbon, he was received with the admiration and gratitude due to a man, who, by his superior abilities and resolution, had conducted to such an happy issue an undertaking of the greatest importance, which had long occupied the thoughts of his sovereign, and excited the hopes of his fellow subjects[f]. Nor did this event interest the Portuguese alone. No nation in Europe beheld it with unconcern. For although the discovery of a new world, whether we view it as a display of genius in the person who first conceived an idea of that undertaking

[f] Asia de João de Barros, dec. i. lib. iv. c. 11. Castagneda, Hist. de l'Inde trad. en François, liv. i. c. 2—28.

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which led mankind to the knowledge of it, whether we contemplate its influence upon ſcience by giving a more complete knowledge of the globe which we inhabit, or whether we conſider its effects upon the commercial intercourſe of mankind, be an event far more ſplendid than the voyage of Gama, yet the latter ſeems originally to have excited more general attention. The former, indeed, filled the minds of men with aſtoniſhment; it was ſome time, however, before they attained ſuch a ſufficient knowledge of that portion of the earth now laid open to their view, as to form any juſt idea, or even probable conjecture, with reſpect to what might be the conſequences of communication with it. But the immenſe value of the Indian trade, which both in ancient and in modern times had enriched every nation by which it was carried on, was a ſubject familiar to the thoughts of all intelligent men, and they at once perceived that the diſcovery of this new route of navigation to the Eaſt, muſt occaſion great revolutions, not only in the courſe of commerce, but in the political ſtate of Europe.

WHAT theſe revolutions were moſt likely to be, and how they would operate, were points examined with particular attention in the cities of Liſbon and of Venice, but with feelings very different. The Portugueſe, founding upon the rights to which, in that age, priority of diſcovery, confirmed by a papal grant, were ſuppoſed to confer, deemed themſelves entitled to an ex-

clusive commerce with the countries which they had first visited, began to enjoy, by anticipation, all the benefits of it, and to fancy that their capital would soon be what Venice then was, the great store-house of eastern commodities to all Europe, and the seat of opulence and power. On the first intelligence of Gama's successful voyage, the Venetians, with the quick-sighted discernment of merchants, foresaw the immediate consequence of it to be the ruin of that lucrative branch of commerce which had contributed so greatly to enrich and aggrandize their country; and they observed this with more poignant concern, as they were apprehensive that they did not possess any effectual means of preventing, or even retarding, its operation.

The hopes and fears of both were well founded. The Portuguese entered upon the new career opened to them with activity and ardour, and made exertions, both commercial and military, far beyond what could have been expected from a kingdom of such inconsiderable extent. All these were directed by an intelligent monarch, capable of forming plans of the greatest magnitude with calm systematic wisdom, and of prosecuting them with unremitting perseverance. The prudence and vigour of his measures, however, would have availed little without proper instruments to carry them into execution. Happily for Portugal, the discerning eye of Emanuel selected a succession of officers to take the supreme command in India,

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who, by their enterprifing valour, military fkill, and political fagacity, accompanied with difintereftedness integrity, public fpirit, and love of their country, have a title to be ranked with the perfons moft eminent for virtue and abilities in any age or nation. Greater things perhaps were atchieved by them than were ever accomplifhed in fo fhort a time. Before the clofe of Emanuel's reign, twenty-four years only after the voyage of Gama, the Portuguefe had rendered themfelves mafters of the city of Malacca, in which the great ftaple of trade carried on among the inhabitants of all thofe regions in Afia, which Europeans have diftinguifhed by the general name of the Eaft Indies, was then eftablifhed. To this port, fituated nearly at an equal diftance from the eaftern and weftern extremities of thefe countries, and poffeffing the command of that ftrait by which they keep communication with each other, the merchants of China, of Japan, of every kingdom on the continent, of the Moluccas, and all the iflands in the Archipelago, reforted from the Eaft; and thofe of Malabar, of Ceylon, of Coromandel, and of Bengal, from the Weft[5]. This conqueft fecured to the Portuguefe great influence over the interior commerce of India, while, at the fame time, by their fettlements at Goa and Diu, they were enabled to engrofs the trade of the Malabar coaft, and to obftruct greatly the long-eftablifhed intercourfe of Egypt

[5] Decad. de Carros, dec. i. liv. viii. c. 1. Ofor. de reb. Eman. lib. vii. 213, &c.

with

with India by the Red Sea. Their ſhips frequented every port in the Eaſt where valuable commodities were to be found, from the Cape of Good Hope to the river of Canton; and along this immenſe ſtretch of coaſt, extending upwards of four thouſand leagues[h], they had eſtabliſhed, for the conveniency or protection of trade, a chain of forts or factories. They had likewiſe taken poſſeſſion of ſtations moſt favourable to commerce along the Southern coaſt of Africa, and in many of the iſlands which lie between Madagaſcar and the Moluccas. In every part of the Eaſt they were received with reſpect, in many they had acquired the abſolute command. They carried on trade there without rival or controul; they preſcribed to the natives the terms of their mutual intercourſe; they often ſet what price they pleaſed on goods which they purchaſed; and were thus enabled to import from Indoſtan and the regions beyond it, whatever is uſeful, rare, or agreeable, in greater abundance, and of more various kinds, than had been known formerly in Europe.

Not ſatisfied with this aſcendant which they had acquired in India, the Portugueſe early formed a ſcheme, no leſs bold than intereſted, of excluding all other nations from participating of the advantages of commerce with the Eaſt. In order to effect this, it was neceſſary to obtain

[h] Hiſt. Gener. des Voyages, tom. i. p. 140.

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poſſeſſion of ſuch ſtations in the Arabian and Perſian Gulfs, as might render them maſters of the navigation of theſe two inland ſeas, and enable them both to obſtruct the ancient commercial intercourſe between Egypt and India, and to command the entrance of the great rivers, which facilitated the conveyance of Indian goods, not only through the interior provinces of Aſia, but as far as Conſtantinople. The conduct of the meaſures for this purpoſe was committed to Alphonſo Albuquerque, the moſt eminent of all the Portugueſe generals who diſtinguiſhed themſelves in India. After the utmoſt efforts of genius and valour, he was able to accompliſh one-half only of what the ambition of his countrymen had planned. By wreſting the iſland of Ormuz, which commanded the mouth of the Perſian Gulf, from the petty princes, who, as tributaries to the monarchs of Perſia, had eſtabliſhed their dominion there, he ſecured to Portugal that extenſive trade with the Eaſt, which the Perſians had carried on for ſeveral centuries. In the hands of the Portugueſe, Ormus ſoon became the great mart from which the Perſian empire, and all the provinces of Aſia to the weſt of it, were ſupplied with the productions of India; and a city which they built on that barren iſland, deſtitute of water, was rendered one of the chief ſeats of opulence, ſplendour, and luxury in the Eaſtern World[1].

[1] Oſorius de reb. geſtis Eman. lib. x. p. 274, &c. Travernier's Travels, book v. c. 23. Kœmpfer Amœnit. Exot. p. 756, &c.

THE

THE operations of Albuquerque in the Red Sea were far from being attended with equal ſucceſs. Partly by the vigorous reſiſtance of the Arabian Princes, whoſe ports he attacked, and partly by the damage his fleet ſuſtained in a ſea of which the navigation is remarkably difficult and dangerous, he was conſtrained to retire, without effecting any ſettlement of importance [k]. The ancient channel of intercourſe with India by the Red Sea ſtill continued open to the Egyptians; but their commercial tranſactions in that country were greatly circumſcribed and obſtructed, by the influence which the Portugueſe had acquired in every port to which they were accuſtomed to reſort.

IN conſequence of this, the Venetians ſoon began to feel that decreaſe of their own Indian trade which they had foreſeen and dreaded. In order to prevent the farther progreſs of this evil, they perſuaded the Soldan of the Mameluks, equally alarmed with themſelves at the rapid ſucceſs of the Portugueſe in the Eaſt, and no leſs intereſted to hinder them from engroſſing that commerce, which had ſo long been the chief ſource of opulence both to the monarchs and to the people of Egypt, to enter into a negociation with the Pope and the King of Portugal. The tone which the Soldan aſſumed in this negociation was ſuch as became the fierce chief of a military government. After ſtating his excluſive

[k] Oſorius, lib. ix, p. 248, &c.

right

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right to the trade with India, he forewarned Julius II. and Emanuel, that if the Portugueſe did not relinquiſh that new courſe of navigation by which they had penetrated into the Indian ocean, and ceaſe from encroaching on that commerce, which from time immemorial had been carried on between the eaſt of Aſia and his dominions, he would put to death all the Chriſtians in Egypt, Syria, and Paleſtine, burn their churches, and demoliſh the holy ſepulchre itſelf[1]. This formidable threat, which, during ſeveral centuries, would have made all Chriſtendom tremble, ſeems to have made ſo little impreſſion, that the Venetians, as the laſt expedient, had recourſe to a meaſure which, in that age, was deemed not only reprehenſible but impious. They incited the Soldan to fit out a fleet in the Red Sea, and to attack thoſe unexpected invaders of a gainful monopoly, of which he and his predeceſſors had long enjoyed undiſturbed poſſeſſion. As Egypt did not produce timber proper for building ſhips of force, the Venetians permitted the Soldan to cut it in their foreſts of Dalmatia, whence it was conveyed to Alexandria, and then carried partly by water and partly by land to Suez. There twelve ſhips of war were built, on board of which a body of Mameluks was ordered to ſerve, under the command of an officer of merit. Theſe new enemies, far more formidable than the natives of India with whom the Portugueſe had hitherto

[1] Oſorius de rebus Eman. lib. iv. p. 110. edit. 1580. Aſia de Barros, decad. i. lib. viii. c. 2.

contended,

contended, they encountered with undaunted courage, and after ſome conflicts, they entirely ruined the ſquadron, and remained maſters of the Indian ocean [m]. SECT. III.

Soon after this diſaſter, the dominion of the Mameluks was overturned, and Egypt, Syria, and Paleſtine were ſubjected to the Turkiſh empire by the victorious arms of Selim I. Their mutual intereſt quickly induced the Turks and Venetians to forget ancient animoſities, and to co-operate towards the ruin of the Portugueſe trade in India. With this view Selim confirmed to the Venetians the extenſive commercial privileges which they had enjoyed under the government of the Mameluks, and publiſhed an edict permitting the free entry of all the productions of the Eaſt, imported directly from Alexandria, into every part of his dominions, and impoſing heavy duties upon ſuch as were brought from Liſbon [n].

But all theſe were unavailing efforts againſt the ſuperior advantages which the Portugueſe poſſeſſed in ſupplying Europe with the commodities of the Eaſt, in conſequence of having opened a new mode of communication with it. At the ſame time, the Venetians, brought to the brink of ruin by the fatal league of Cambray, which broke the power and humbled the pride

[m] Aſia de Barros, dec. ii. lib. ii. c. 6. Lafitau, Hiſt. de Decouvertes des Portugais, i. 292, &c. Oſor. lib. iv. p. 120.

[n] Sandi Stor. Civ. Venez. part ii. 901. part iii. 432.

of

SECT. III. of the republic, were incapable of ſuch efforts for the preſervation of their commerce, as they might have made in the more vigorous age of their government, and were reduced to the feeble expedients of a declining ſtate. Of this there is a remarkable inſtance in an offer made by them to the King of Portugal, in the year one thouſand five hundred and twenty-one, to purchaſe at a ſtipulated price, all the ſpices imported into Liſbon, over and above what might be requiſite for the conſumption of his own ſubjects. If Emanuel had been ſo inconſiderate as to cloſe with this propoſal, Venice would have recovered all the benefit of the gainful monopoly which ſhe had loſt. But the offer met with the reception that it merited, and was rejected without heſitation [o].

THE Portugueſe, almoſt without obſtruction, continued their progreſs in the Eaſt, until they eſtabliſhed there a commercial empire; to which, whether we conſider its extent, its opulence, the ſlender power by which it was formed, or the ſplendour with which the government of it was conducted, there had hitherto been nothing comparable in the hiſtory of nations. Emanuel, who laid the foundation of this ſtupendous fabric, had the ſatisfaction to ſee it almoſt completed. Every part of Europe was ſupplied by the Portugueſe with the productions of the Eaſt; and if we except ſome inconſiderable quantity of them, which

[o] Oſor. de reb. Eman. lib. xii. 265.

the

the Venetians ſtill continued to receive by the ancient channels of conveyance, our quarter of the globe had no longer any commercial intercourſe with India, and the regions of Aſia beyond it, but by the Cape of Good Hope.

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THOUGH from this period the people of Europe have continued to carry on their trade with India by ſea, yet a conſiderable portion of the valuable productions of the Eaſt is ſtill conveyed to other regions of the earth by land-carriage. In tracing the progreſs of trade with India, this branch of it is an object of conſiderable magnitude, which has not been examined with ſufficient attention. That the ancients ſhould have had recourſe frequently to the tedious and expenſive mode of tranſporting goods by land, will not appear ſurpriſing, when we recollect the imperfect ſtate of navigation among them: The reaſon of this mode of conveyance being not only continued, but increaſed, in modern times, demands ſome explanation.

IF we inſpect a map of Aſia, we cannot fail to obſerve, that the communication throughout all the countries of that great continent to the weſt of Indoſtan and China, though opened in ſome degree towards the ſouth by the navigable rivers, Euphrates and Tigris, and towards the north by two inland ſeas, the Euxine and Caſpian, muſt be carried on in many extenſive provinces wholly by land. This, as I have obſerved, was the firſt mode of intercourſe between different countries, and

SECT. III. and during the infancy of navigation it was the only one. Even after that art had attained ſome degree of improvement, the conveyance of goods by the two rivers formerly mentioned, extended ſo little way into the interior country, and the trade of the Euxine and Caſpian ſeas were ſo often obſtructed by the barbarous nations ſcattered along their ſhores, that partly on that account, and partly from the adherence of mankind to ancient habits, the commerce of the various provinces of Aſia, particularly that with India and the regions beyond it, continued to be conducted by land.

THE ſame circumſtances which induced the inhabitants of Aſia to carry on ſuch a conſiderable part of their commerce with each other in this manner, operated with ſtill more powerful effect in Africa. That vaſt continent, which little reſembles the other diviſions of the earth, is not penetrated with inland ſeas, like Europe and Aſia, or by a chain of lakes like North America, or opened by rivers (the Nile alone excepted) of extended navigation. It forms one uniform, continuous ſurface, between the various parts of which there could be no intercourſe from the earlieſt times, but by land. Rude as all the people of Africa are, and ſlender as the progreſs is which they have made in the arts of life, ſuch a communication appears to have been early opened and always kept up. How far it extended in the more early periods to which my reſearches have been directed, and by what differ-

ent

ent routes it was carried on, I have not ſufficient information to determine with accuracy. It is highly probable that from time immemorial, the gold, the ivory, the perfumes, both of the ſouthern parts of Africa, and of its more northern diſtricts, were conveyed either to the Arabian Gulf, or to Egypt, and exchanged for the ſpices and other productions of the Eaſt.

THE Mahomedan religion, which ſpread with amazing rapidity over all Aſia, and a conſiderable part of Africa, contributed greatly towards the increaſe of commercial intercourſe by land in both theſe quarters of the globe, and has given it additional vigour, by mingling with it a new principle of activity, and by directing it to a common centre. Mahomet enjoined all his followers to viſit once in their life-time, the Caaba, or ſquare building in the temple of Mecca, the immemorial object of veneration among his countrymen, not only on account of its having been choſen (according to their tradition) to be the reſidence of man at his creation [p], but becauſe it was the firſt ſpot on this earth which was conſecrated to the worſhip of God [q]; in order to preſerve continually upon their minds a ſenſe of obligation to perform this duty, he directed that, in all the multiplied acts of devotion which his

[p] Abul-Ghazi Bayadur Khan, Hiſt. General. des Tatars. p. 15.

[q] Ohſſon Tableau General de l'Empire Othoman, tom. iii. p. 150, &c. 289. edit. 8vo.

religion

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religion prescribes, true believers should always turn their faces towards that holy place[r]. In obedience to a precept solemnly enjoined and sedulously inculcated, large caravans of pilgrims assemble annually in every country where the Mahomedan faith is established. From the shores of the Atlantic on one hand, and from the most remote regions of the East on the other, the votaries of the Prophet advance to Mecca. Commercial ideas and objects mingle with those of devotion. The numerous camels[s] of each caravan are loaded with those commodities of every country which are of easiest carriage and most ready sale. The holy city is crowded, not only with zealous devotees, but with opulent merchants. During the few days they remain there, the fair of Mecca is the greatest, perhaps, on the face of the earth. Mercantile transactions are carried on in it to an immense value, of which the dispatch, the silence, the mutual confidence and good faith in conducting them, are the most unequivocal proof. The productions and manufactures of India form a capital article in this great traffic, and the caravans on their return disseminate them through every part of Asia and Africa. Some of these are deemed necessary, not only to the comfort, but to the preservation of life, and others contribute to its elegance and pleasure.

[r] Herbelot Biblioth. Orient. artic. *Caaba* & *Keblah*.
[s] See NOTE LIII.

They

They are ſo various as to ſuit the taſte of mankind in every climate, and in different ſtages of improvement; and are in high requeſt among the rude natives of Africa, as well as the more luxurious inhabitants of Aſia. In order to ſupply their ſeveral demands, the caravans return loaded with the muſlins and chintzes of Bengal and the Deccan, the ſhawls of Cachemire, the pepper of Malabar, the diamonds of Golconda, the pearls of Kilkare, the cinnamon of Ceylon, the nutmeg, cloves, and mace of the Moluccas, and an immenſe number of other Indian commodities.

Beside theſe great caravans, formed partly by reſpect for a religious precept, and partly with a view to extend a lucrative branch of commerce, there are other caravans, and theſe not inconſiderable, compoſed entirely of merchants, who have no object but trade. Theſe, at ſtated ſeaſons, ſet out from different parts of the Turkiſh and Perſian dominions, and proceeding to Indoſtan, and even to China, by routes which were anciently known, they convey by land-carriage the moſt valuable commodities of theſe countries to the remote provinces of both empires. It is only by conſidering the diſtance to which large quantities of theſe commodities are carried, and frequently acroſs extenſive deſerts, which, without the aid of camels, would have been impaſſable, that we can form any idea of the magnitude of the trade with India by land, and are led to perceive,

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that in a Disquisition concerning the various modes of conducting this commerce, it is well entitled to the attention which I have bestowed in endeavouring to trace it[t].

[t] See NOTE LIV.

AN

HISTORICAL DISQUISITION

CONCERNING

ANCIENT INDIA.

SECTION IV.

General Obſervations.

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THUS I have endeavoured to deſcribe the progreſs of trade with India, both by ſea and by land, from the earlieſt times in which hiſtory affords any authentic information concerning it, until an entire revolution was made in its nature, and the mode of carrying it on, by that great diſcovery which I originally fixed as the utmoſt boundary of my enquiries. Here, then, this Diſquiſition might have been terminated. But as I have conducted my readers to that period when a new order of ideas, and new arrangements of policy began to be introduced into Europe, in conſequence of the value and importance of commerce being ſo thoroughly underſtood, that in almoſt every country the

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encouragement of it became a chief object of public attention; as we have now reached that point whence a line may be drawn which marks the chief diſtinction between the manners and political inſtitutions of ancient and modern times, it will render the work more inſtructive and uſeful, to conclude it with ſome general obſervations, which naturally ariſe from a ſurvey of both, and a compariſon of the one with the other. Theſe obſervations, I truſt, will be found not only to have an intimate connection with the ſubject of my reſearches, and to throw additional light upon it; but will ſerve to illuſtrate many particulars in the general hiſtory of commerce, and to point out effects or conſequences of various events, which have not been generally obſerved, or conſidered with that attention which they merited.

I. After vewing the great and extenſive effects of finding a new courſe of navigation to India by the Cape of Good Hope, it may appear ſurpriſing to a modern obſerver, that a diſcovery of ſuch importance was not made, or even attempted, by any of the commercial ſtates of the ancient world. But in judging with reſpect to the conduct of nations in remote times, we never err more widely, than when we decide with regard to it, not according to the ideas and views of their age, but of our own. This is not, perhaps, more conſpicuous in any inſtance, than in that under conſideration. It was by the Tyrians, and by the

Greeks, who were maſters of Egypt, that the different people of Europe were firſt ſupplied with the productions of the Eaſt. From the account that has been given of the manner in which they procured theſe, it is manifeſt that they had neither the ſame inducements with modern nations, to wiſh for any new communication with India, nor the ſame means of accompliſhing it. All the commercial tranſactions of the ancients with the Eaſt were confined to the ports on the Malabar coaſt, or extended at fartheſt to the iſland of Ceylon. To theſe ſtaples the natives of all the different regions in the eaſtern parts of Aſia brought the commodities which were the growth of their ſeveral countries, or the product of their ingenuity, in their own veſſels, and with them the ſhips from Tyre, and from Egypt completed their inveſtments. While the operations of their Indian trade were carried on within a ſphere ſo circumſcribed, the conveyance of a cargo by the Arabian Gulf, notwithſtanding the expence of land-carriage, either from Elath to Rhinocolura, or acroſs the deſert to the Nile, was ſo ſafe and commodious, that the merchants of Tyre and Alexandria had little reaſon to be ſolicitous for the diſcovery of any other. The ſituation of both theſe cities, as well as that of the other conſiderable commercial ſtates of antiquity, was very different from that of the countries, to which, in later times, mankind have been indebted for keeping up intercourſe with the remote parts of the globe. Portugal, Spain, England, Holland, which have been moſt active

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and ſucceſsful in this line of enterpriſe, all lie on the Atlantic ocean (in which every European voyage of diſcovery muſt commence), or have immediate acceſs to it. But Tyre was ſituated at the eaſtern extremity of the Mediterranean, Alexandria not far from it; Rhodes, Athens, Corinth, which came afterwards to be ranked among the moſt active trading cities of antiquity, lay conſiderably advanced towards the ſame quarter in that ſea. The commerce of all theſe ſtates was long confined within the precincts of the Mediterranean; and in ſome of them, never extended beyond it. The pillars of Hercules, or the ſtraits of Gibraltar, were long conſidered as the utmoſt boundary of navigation. To reach this was deemed a ſignal proof of naval ſkill; and before any of theſe ſtates could give a beginning to an attempt towards exploring the vaſt unknown ocean which lay beyond it, they had to accompliſh a voyage (according to their ideas) of great extent and much danger. This was ſufficient to deter them from engaging in an arduous undertaking, from which, even if attended with ſucceſs, their ſituation prevented their entertaining hopes of deriving great advantage[a].

But could we ſuppoſe the diſcovery of a new paſſage to India to have become an object of deſire or purſuit to any of theſe ſtates, their ſcience as well as practice of navigation was ſo defective,

[a] See NOTE LV.

that

that it would have been hardly possible for them to attain it. The vessels which the ancients employed in trade were so small, as not to afford stowage for provisions sufficient to subsist a crew during a long voyage. Their construction was such, that they could seldom venture to depart far from land, and their mode of steering along the coast (which I have been obliged to mention often) so circuitous and slow, that from these as well as from other circumstances which I might have specified [b], we may pronounce a voyage from the Mediterranean to India by the Cape of Good Hope, to have been an undertaking beyond their power to accomplish, in such a manner as to render it in any degree, subservient to commerce. To this decision, the account preserved by Herodotus, of a voyage performed by some Phenician ships employed by a king of Egypt, which, taking their departure from the Arabian Gulf, doubled the southern promontory of Africa, and arrived at the end of three years, by the straits of Gades, or Gibraltar, at the mouth of the Nile [c], can hardly be considered as repugnant; for several writers of the greatest eminence among the ancients, and most distinguished for their proficiency in the knowledge of geography, regarded this account rather as an amusing tale, than the history of a real transaction; and either entertained doubts concerning the possibility

[b] Goguet Orig. des Loix des Arts, &c. ii. 303. 329.
[c] Lib. iv. c. 42.

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of ſailing round Africa, or abſolutely denied it[d]. But if what Herodotus relates concerning the courſe held by theſe Phenician ſhips had ever been received by the ancients with general aſſent, we can hardly ſuppoſe that any ſtate could have been ſo wildly adventurous as to imagine that a voyage, which it required three years to complete, could be undertaken with a proſpect of commercial benefit.

II. The rapid progreſs of the moderns in exploring India, as well as the extenſive power and valuable ſettlements which they early acquired there, mark ſuch a diſtinction between their mode of conducting naval operations, and that of the ancients, as merits to be conſidered and explained with attention. From the reign of the firſt Ptolemy, to the conqueſt of Egypt by the Mahomedans, Europe had been ſupplied with the productions of the Eaſt by the Greeks of Alexandria, by the Romans while they were maſters of Egypt, and by the ſubjects of the Emperors of Conſtantinople, when that kingdom became a province of their dominions. During this long period, extending almoſt to a thouſand years, none of thoſe people, the moſt enlightened undoubtedly in the ancient world, ever advanced by ſea farther towards the Eaſt than the Gulf of Siam, and had no regular eſtabliſhed trade but with the ports on the coaſt

[d] Polyb. lib. iii. p. 193. edit. Caſaub. Plin. Nat. Hiſt. lib. ii, c. 6. Ptol. Geogr. lib. iv. c. 9. See NOTE LVI.

of

of Malabar, or thoſe in the iſland of Ceylon. They attempted no conqueſts in any part of India, they made no ſettlements, they erected no forts. Satisfied with an intercourſe merely commercial, they did not aim at acquiring any degree of power or dominion in the countries where they traded, though it ſeems to be probable that they might have eſtabliſhed it without much oppoſition from the natives, a gentle effeminate people, with whom, at that time, no foreign and more warlike race was mingled. But the enterpriſing activity of the Portugueſe was not long confined within the ſame limits; a few years after their arrival at Calecut, they advanced towards the Eaſt, into regions unknown to the ancients. The kingdoms of Cambodia, Cochin China, Tonquin, the vaſt empire of China, and all the fertile iſlands in the great Indian Archipelago, from Sumatra to the Philippines, were diſcovered, and the Portugueſe, though oppoſed in every quarter by the Mahomedans of Tartar or Arabian origin ſettled in many parts of India, enemies much more formidable than the natives, eſtabliſhed there that extenſive influence and dominion which I have formerly deſcribed.

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Of this remarkable difference between the progreſs and operations of the ancients and moderns in India, the imperfect knowledge of the former, with reſpect both to the theory and practice of navigation, ſeems to have been the principal cauſe. From the coaſt of Malabar to the Philippines, was a voyage of an extent far beyond any that the ancients were accuſtomed to under-

SECT. IV. undertake, and, according to their manner of failing, muſt have required a great length of time to perform it. The nature of their trade with India was ſuch, that they had not (as has been formerly obſerved) the ſame inducements with the moderns, to proſecute diſcovery with ardour; and, according to the deſcription given of the veſſels in which the merchants of Alexandria carried on their trade from the Arabian Gulf, they appear to have been very unfit for that purpoſe. On all theſe accounts the ancients remained ſatisfied with a ſlender knowledge of India; and influenced by reaſons proceeding from the ſame cauſe, they attempted neither conqueſt nor ſettlement there. In order to accompliſh either of theſe, they muſt have tranſported a conſiderable number of men into India. But, from the defective ſtructure of their ſhips, as well as from the imperfection of their art in navigating them, the ancients ſeldom ventured to convey a body of troops to any diſtance by ſea. From Berenice to Muſiris was to them, even after Hippalus had diſcovered the method of ſteering a direct courſe, and when their naval ſkill had attained to its higheſt ſtate of improvement, a voyage of no leſs than ſeventy days. By the ancient route along the coaſt of Perſia, a voyage from the Arabian Gulf to any part of India muſt have been of greater length, and accompliſhed more ſlowly. As no hoſtile attack was ever made upon India by ſea, either by the Greek monarchs of Egypt, though the two firſt of them were able and ambitious Princes, or by the moſt enterprizing of the Roman Emperors, it

it is evident that they muſt have deemed it an attempt beyond their power to execute. Alexander the Great, and, in imitation of him, his ſucceſſors, the monarchs of Syria, were the only perſons in the ancient world who formed an idea of eſtabliſhing their dominion in any part of India; but it was with armies led thither by land that they hoped to atchieve this.

III. The ſudden effect of opening a direct communication with the Eaſt, in lowering the price of Indian commodities, is a circumſtance that merits obſervation. How compendious ſoever the ancient intercourſe with India may appear to have been, it was attended with conſiderable expence. The productions of the remote parts of Aſia, brought to Ceylon, or to the ports on the Malabar coaſt, by the natives, were put on board the ſhips which arrived from the Arabian Gulf. At Berenice they were landed, and carried by camels two hundred and fifty-eight miles to the banks of the Nile. There they were again embarked, and conveyed down the river to Alexandria, whence they were diſpatched to different markets. The addition to the price of goods by ſuch a multiplicity of operations muſt have been conſiderable, eſpecially when the rate chargeable on each operation was fixed by monopoliſts, ſubject to no controul. But, after the paſſage to India by the Cape of Good Hope was diſcovered, its various commodities were purchaſed at firſt hand in the countries of which they were the growth or manufacture. In all theſe, particularly in Indoſtan and in China, the

ſubſiſt-

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ſubſiſtence of man is more abundant than in any other part of the earth. The people live chiefly upon rice, the moſt prolific of all grains; population, of conſequence, is ſo great, and labour ſo extremely cheap, that every production of nature or of art is ſold at a very low price. When theſe were ſhipped in different parts of India, they were conveyed directly to Liſbon, by a navigation, long indeed, but uninterrupted and ſafe, and thence circulated through Europe. The carriage of mercantile goods by water is ſo much leſs expenſive than by any other mode of conveyance, that as ſoon as the Portugueſe could import the productions of India in ſufficient quantities to ſupply the demands of Europe, they were able to afford them at ſuch a reduced price, that the competition of the Venetians ceaſed almoſt entirely, and the full ſtream of commerce flowed in its natural direction towards the cheapeſt market. In what proportion the Portugueſe lowered the price of Indian commodities, I cannot aſcertain with preciſion, as I have not found in contemporary writers ſufficient information with reſpect to that point. Some idea, however, of this, approaching perhaps near to accuracy, may be formed, from the computations of Mr. Munn, an intelligent Engliſh merchant. He has publiſhed a table of the prices paid for various articles of goods in India, compared with the prices for which they were ſold in Aleppo, from which the difference appears to be nearly as three to one; and he calculates, that, after a reaſonable allowance for the expence of the voyage from India, the ſame goods

goods may be ſold in England at half the price which they bear in Aleppo. The expence of conveying the productions of India up the Perſian Gulf to Baſſora, and thence either through the Great or Little Deſert to Aleppo, could not, I ſhould imagine, differ conſiderably from that by the Red Sea to Alexandria. We may therefore ſuppoſe, that the Venetians might purchaſe them from the merchants of that city, at nearly the ſame rate for which they were ſold in Aleppo; and when we add to this, what they muſt have charged as their own profit in all the markets which they frequented, it is evident that the Portugueſe might afford to reduce the commodities of the Eaſt at a price below that which has been mentioned, and might ſupply every part of Europe with them more than one-half cheaper than formerly. The enterprizing ſchemes of the Portugueſe monarchs were accompliſhed ſooner, as well as more completely, than in the hour of moſt ſanguine hope they could have preſumed to expect; and early in the ſixteenth century, their ſubjects became poſſeſſed of a monopoly of the trade with India, founded upon the only equitable title, that of furniſhing its productions in greater abundance, and at a more moderate price.

IV. We may obſerve, that in conſequence of a more plentiful ſupply of Indian goods, and at a cheaper rate, the demand for them increaſed rapidly in every part of Europe. To trace the progreſs of this in detail, would lead me far beyond the period which I have fixed as the limit of

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of this Diſquiſition, but ſome general remarks concerning it will be found intimately connected with the ſubject of my inquiries. The chief articles of importation from India, while the Romans had the direction of the trade with that country, have been formerly ſpecified. But upon the ſubverſion of their empire, and the ſettlement of the fierce warriors of Scythia and Germany in the various countries of Europe, the ſtate of ſociety, as well as the condition of individuals, became ſo extremely different, that the wants and deſires of men were no longer the ſame. Barbarians, many of them not far advanced in their progreſs beyond the rudeſt ſtate of ſocial life, had little reliſh for thoſe accommodations, and that elegance, which are ſo alluring to poliſhed nations. The curious manufactures of ſilk, the precious ſtones and pearls of the Eaſt, which had been the ornament and pride of the wealthy and luxurious citizens of Rome, were not objects of deſire to men, who, for a conſiderable time after they took poſſeſſion of their new conqueſts, retained the original ſimplicity of their paſtoral manners. They advanced, however, from rudeneſs to refinement in the uſual courſe of progreſſion which nations are deſtined to hold, and an increaſe of wants and deſires requiring new objects to gratify them, they began to acquire a reliſh for ſome of the luxuries of India. Among theſe they had a ſingular predilection for the ſpiceries and aromatics which that country yields in ſuch variety and abundance. Whence their peculiar fondneſs for theſe aroſe, it is not of im-

portance to inquire. Whoever consults the writers of the middle ages, will find many particulars which confirm this observation. In every enumeration of Indian commodities which they give, spices are always mentioned as the most considerable and precious article[e]. In their cookery, all dishes were highly seasoned with them. In every entertainment of parade, a profusion of them was deemed essential to magnificence. In every medical prescription they were principal ingredients[f]. But considerable as the demand for spices had become, the mode in which the nations of Europe had hitherto been supplied with them was extremely disadvantageous. The ships employed by the merchants of Alexandria never ventured to visit those remote regions which produce the most valuable spices, and before they could be circulated through Europe, they were loaded with the accumulated profits received by four or five different hands through which they had passed. But the Portuguese, with a bolder spirit of navigation, having penetrated into every part of Asia, took in their cargo of spices in the places where they grew, and could afford to dispose of them at such a price, that, from being an expensive luxury, they became an article of such general use, as greatly augmented the demand for them. An effect similar to this may be observed, with respect to the demand for other commodi-

[e] Jac. de Vitriac. Hist. Hierosol. ap. Bongars, i. p. 1099. Willh. Tyr. lib. xii. c. 23.

[f] Du Cange Glossar. Verb. *Aromata, Species*. Henry's Hist. of G. Brit. vol. iv. p. 597, 598.

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V. LUCRATIVE as the trade with India was, and had long been deemed, it is remarkable that the Portuguese were suffered to remain in the undisturbed and exclusive possession of it, during the course of almost a century. In the ancient world, though Alexandria, from the peculiar felicity of its situation, could carry on an intercourse with the East by sea, and circulate its productions through Europe with such advantage, as gave it a decided superiority over every rival; yet various attempts (which have been described in their proper places) were made from time to time, to obtain some share in a commerce so apparently beneficial. From the growing activity of the commercial spirit in the sixteenth century, as well as from the example of the eager solicitude with which the Venetians and Genoese exerted themselves alternately to shut out each other from any share in the Indian trade, it might have been expected that some competitor would have arisen to call in question the claim of the Portuguese to an exclusive right of traffic with the East, and to wrest from them some portion of it. There were, however, at that time, some pecu-

[5] See NOTE LVII.

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liar circumſtances in the political ſtate of all thoſe nations in Europe, whoſe intruſion, as rivals, the Portugueſe had any reaſon to dread, which ſecured to them the quiet enjoyment of their monopoly of Indian commerce, during ſuch a long period. From the acceſſion of Charles V. to the throne, Spain was either ſo much occupied in a multiplicity of operations in which it was engaged by the ambition of that monarch, and of his ſon Philip II., or ſo intent on proſecuting its own diſcoveries and conqueſts in the New World, that although, by the ſucceſsful enterprize of Magellan, its fleets were unexpectedly conducted by a new courſe to that remote region of Aſia which was the ſeat of the moſt gainful and alluring branch of trade carried on by the Portugueſe, it could make no conſiderable effort to avail itſelf of the commercial advantages which it might have derived from that event. By the acquiſition of the crown of Portugal, in the year one thouſand five hundred and eighty, the kings of Spain, inſtead of the rivals, became the protectors of the Portugueſe trade, and the guardians of all its excluſive rights. Throughout the ſixteenth century, the ſtrength and reſources of France were ſo much waſted by the fruitleſs expeditions of their monarchs into Italy, by their unequal conteſt with the power and policy of Charles V., and by the calamities of the civil wars which deſolated the kingdom upwards of forty years, that it could neither beſtow much attention upon objects of commerce, nor engage in any ſcheme of diſtant enterprize. The Venetians, how ſenſibly ſoever they might feel the mortifying reverſe

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A. D. 1521.

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of being excluded, almoſt entirely, from the Indian trade, of which their capital had been formerly the chief ſeat, were ſo debilitated and humbled by the league of Cambray, that they were no longer capable of engaging in any undertaking of magnitude. England, weakened (as was formerly obſerved) by the long conteſt between the houſes of York and Lancaſter, and juſt beginning to recover its proper vigour, was reſtrained from active exertion, during one part of the ſixteenth century, by the cautious maxims of Henry VII., and waſted its ſtrength, during another part of it, by engaging inconſiderately in the wars between the princes on the continent. The nation, though deſtined to acquire territories in India more extenſive and valuable than were ever poſſeſſed by any European power, had no ſuch preſentiment of its future eminence there, as to take an early part in the commerce or tranſactions of that country, and a great part of the century elapſed before it began to turn its attention towards the Eaſt.

While the moſt conſiderable nations in Europe found it neceſſary, from the circumſtances which I have mentioned, to remain inactive ſpectators of what paſſed in the Eaſt, the Seven United Provinces of the Low Countries, recently formed into a ſmall ſtate, ſtill ſtruggling for political exiſtence, and yet in the infancy of its power, ventured to appear in the Indian ocean as the rivals of the Portugueſe; and, deſpiſing their pretenſions to an excluſive right of commerce with the extenſive countries to the eaſt-

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ward of the Cape of Good Hope, invaded that monopoly which they had hitherto guarded with ſuch jealous attention. The Engliſh ſoon followed the example of the Dutch, and both nations, at firſt by the enterpriſing induſtry of private adventurers, and afterwards by the more powerful efforts of trading companies, under the protection of public authority, advanced with aſtoniſhing ardour and ſucceſs in this new career opened to them. The vaſt fabric of power which the Portugueſe had erected in the Eaſt (a ſuperſtructure much too large for the baſis on which it had to reſt) was almoſt entirely overturned, in as ſhort time, and with as much facility, as it had been raiſed. England and Holland, by driving them from their moſt valuable ſettlements, and ſeizing the moſt lucrative branches of their trade, have attained to that pre-eminence in naval power and commercial opulence, by which they are diſtinguiſhed among the nations of Europe.

VI. The coincidence, in point of time, of the diſcoveries made by Columbus in the Weſt, and thoſe of Gama in the Eaſt, is a ſingular circumſtance, which merits obſervation, on account of the remarkable influence of thoſe events in forming or ſtrengthening the commercial connection of the different quarters of the globe with each other. In all ages, gold and ſilver, particularly the latter, have been the commodities exported with the greateſt profit to India. In no part of the earth do the natives depend ſo little upon foreign countries, either for the neceſſaries or

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luxuries of life. The bleſſings of a favourable climate and fertile ſoil, augmented by their own ingenuity, afford them whatever they deſire. In conſequence of this trade with them has always been carried on in one uniform manner, and the precious metals have been given in exchange for their peculiar productions, whether of nature or art. But when the communication with India was rendered ſo much more eaſy, that the demand for its commodities began to increaſe far beyond what had been formerly known, if Europe had not been ſupplied with the gold and ſilver which it was neceſſary to carry to the markets of the Eaſt from ſources richer and more abundant than her own barren and impoveriſhed mines, ſhe muſt either have abandoned the trade with India altogether, or have continued it with manifeſt diſadvantage. By ſuch a continual drain of gold and ſilver, as well as by the unavoidable waſte of both in circulation and in manufactures, the quantity of thoſe metals muſt have gone on diminiſhing, and their value would have been ſo much enhanced, that they could not have continued long to be of the ſame utility in the commercial tranſactions between the two countries. But before the effects of this diminution could be very ſenſibly felt, America opened her mines, and poured in treaſures upon Europe in the moſt copious ſtream to which mankind ever had acceſs. This treaſure, in ſpite of innumerable anxious precautions to prevent it, flowed to the markets where the commodities neceſſary for ſupplying the wants, or gratifying the luxury of the Spaniards, were to be found;

found; and from that time to the prefent, the Englifh and Dutch have purchafed the productions of China and Indoftan, with filver brought from the mines of Mexico and Peru. The immenfe exportation of filver to the Eaft, during the courfe of two centuries, has not only been replaced by the continual influx from America, but the quantity of it has been confiderably augmented, and at the fame time the proportional rate of its value in Europe and in India has varied fo little, that it is chiefly with filver that many of the capital articles imported from the Eaft are ftill purchafed.

While America contributed in this manner to facilitate and extend the intercourfe of Europe with Afia, it gave rife to a traffic with Africa, which, from flender beginnings, has become fo confiderable, as to form the chief bond of commercial connection with that continent. Soon after the Portuguefe had extended their difcoveries on the coaft of Africa beyond the river Senegal, they endeavoured to derive fome benefit from their new fettlements there, by the fale of flaves. Various circumftances combined in favouring the revival of this odious traffic. In every part of America, of which the Spaniards took poffeffion, they found that the natives, from the feeblenefs of their frame, from their indolence, or from the injudicious manner of treating them, were incapable of the exertions requifite either for working mines, or for cultivating the earth. Eager to find hands more induftrious and efficient, the Spaniards had re-

SECT. IV. courſe to their neighbours the Portugueſe, and purchaſed from them negroe ſlaves. Experience ſoon diſcovered that they were men of a more hardy race, and ſo much better fitted for enduring fatigue, that the labour of one negroe was computed to be equal to that of four Americans[h]; and from that time the number employed in the New World has gone on increaſing with rapid progreſs. In this practice, no leſs repugnant to the feelings of humanity than to the principles of religion, the Spaniards have unhappily been imitated by all the nations of Europe, who have acquired territories in the warmer climates of the New World. At preſent the number of negroe ſlaves in the ſettlements of Great Britain and France in the Weſt Indies, exceeds a million; and as the eſtabliſhment of ſervitude has been found, both in ancient and in modern times, extremely unfavourable to population, it requires an annual importation from Africa of at leaſt fifty-eight thouſand to keep up the ſtock[i]. If it were poſſible to aſcertain, with equal exactneſs, the number of ſlaves in the Spaniſh dominions, and in North America, the total number of negroe ſlaves might be well reckoned at as many more.

THUS the commercial genius of Europe, which has given it a viſible aſcendant over the three other diviſions of the earth, by diſcerning their reſpective wants and reſources, and by rendering them reciprocally ſubſervient to one another,

[h] Hiſt. of America, vol. i. p. 320.

[i] Report of Lords of the Privy Council, A. D. 1788.

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has eſtabliſhed an union among them, from which it has derived an immenſe increaſe of opulence, of power, and of enjoyments.

VII. Though the diſcovery of a New World in the Weſt, and the opening of a more eaſy and direct communication with the remote regions of the Eaſt co-operated towards extending the commerce, and adding to the enjoyments, of Europe, a remarkable difference may be obſerved, with reſpect both to the time and the manner in which they produced theſe effects. When the Portugueſe firſt viſited the different countries of Aſia, ſtretching from the coaſt of Malabar to China, they found them poſſeſſed by nations highly civilized, which had made conſiderable progreſs in elegant as well as uſeful arts, which were accuſtomed to intercourſe with ſtrangers, and well acquainted with all the advantages of commerce. But when the Spaniards began to explore the New World which they diſcovered, the aſpect which it preſented to them was very different. The iſlands were inhabited by naked ſavages, ſo unacquainted with the ſimpleſt and moſt neceſſary arts of life, that they ſubſiſted chiefly on the ſpontaneous productions of a fertile ſoil and genial climate. The continent appeared to be a foreſt of immenſe extent, along the coaſt of which were ſcattered ſome feeble tribes, not greatly ſuperior to the iſlanders in induſtry or improvement. Even its two large monarchies, which have been dignified with the appellation of civilized ſtates, had not advanced

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ſo far beyond their countrymen, as to be entitled to that name. The inhabitants both of Mexico and Peru, unacquainted with the uſeful metals, and deſtitute of the addreſs requiſite for acquiring ſuch command of the interior animals as to derive any conſiderable aid from their labour, had made ſo little progreſs in agriculture, the firſt of all arts, that one of the greateſt difficulties with which the ſmall number of Spaniards, who overturned thoſe highly extolled empires, had to ſtruggle, was how to procure in them what was ſufficient for their ſubſiſtence.

It was of conſequence, with a very different ſpirit, that the intercourſe with two countries, reſembling each other ſo little in their degree of improvement, was begun and carried on. The Portugueſe, certain of finding in the Eaſt, not only the productions with which the bountiful hand of Nature has enriched that part of the globe, but various manufactures which had long been known and admired in Europe, engaged in this alluring trade with the greateſt eagerneſs. The encouragement of it their monarchs conſidered as a chief object of government, towards which they directed all the power of the kingdom, and rouzed their ſubjects to ſuch vigorous exertions in the proſecution of it, as occaſioned that aſtoniſhing rapidity of progreſs which I have deſcribed. The ſanguine hopes with which the Spaniards entered upon their career of diſcovery, met not with the ſame ſpeedy gratification. From the induſtry of the rude inhabitants of the New World,

World, they did not receive a ſingle article of commerce. Even the natural productions of the ſoil and climate, when not cheriſhed and multiplied by the foſtering and active hand of man, were of little account. Hope, rather than ſucceſs, incited them to perſiſt in extending their reſearches and conqueſts; and as government derived little immediate benefit from theſe, it left the proſecution of them chiefly to private adventurers, by whoſe enterpriſing activity, more than by any effort of the ſtate, the moſt valuable poſſeſſions of Spain in America were acquired. Inſtead of the inſtantaneous and great advantages which the Portugueſe derived from their diſcoveries, above half a century elapſed before the Spaniards reaped any benefit of conſequence from their conqueſts, except the ſmall quantities of gold which the iſlanders were compelled to collect, and the plunder of the gold and ſilver employed by the Mexicans and Peruvians as ornaments of their perſons and temples, or as utenſils of ſacred or domeſtic uſe. It was not until the diſcovery of the mines of Potoſi in Peru, in the year one thouſand five hundred and forty-five, and of thoſe of Sacotecas in Mexico, ſoon after, that the Spaniſh territories in the New World brought a permanent and valuable addition of wealth and revenue to the mother country.

Nor did the trade with India differ more from that with America, in reſpect of the particular circumſtances which I have explained, than in reſpect

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respect to the manner of carrying it on, after it grew to be a considerable object of political attention. Trade with the East was a simple mercantile transaction, confined to the purchase either of the natural productions of the country, such as spices, precious stones, pearls, &c. or of the manufactures which abounded among an industrious race of men, such as silk and cotton stuffs, porcelain, &c. Nothing more was requisite in conducting this trade, than to settle a few skilful agents in proper places, to prepare a proper assortment of goods for completing the cargoes of ships as soon as they arrived from Europe, or at the utmost to acquire the command of a few fortified stations, which might secure them admission into ports where they might careen in safety, and find protection from the insults of any hostile power. There was no necessity of making any attempt to establish colonies, either for the cultivation of the soil, or the conduct of manufactures. Both these remained, as formerly, in the hands of the natives.

But as soon as that wild spirit of enterprize, which animated the Spaniards who first explored and subdued the New World, began to subside, and when, instead of roving as adventurers from province to province in quest of gold and silver, they seriously turned their thoughts towards rendering their conquests beneficial by cultivation and industry, they found it necessary to establish colonies in every country which they wished to improve. Other nations imitated their example in

in the ſettlements which they afterwards made in ſome of the iſlands, and on the continent of North America. Europe, after having deſolated the New World, began to repeople it, and under a ſyſtem of colonization (the ſpirit and regulations of which it is not the object of this Diſquiſition to explain) the European race has multiplied there amazingly. Every article of commerce imported from the New World, if we except the furs and ſkins purchaſed from the independent tribes of hunters in North America, and from a few tribes in a ſimilar ſtate on the ſouthern continent, is the produce of the induſtry of Europeans ſettled there. To their exertions, or to thoſe of hands which they have taught or compelled to labour, we are indebted for ſugar, rum, cotton, tobacco, indigo, rice, and even the gold and ſilver extracted from the bowels of the earth. Intent on thoſe lucrative branches of induſtry, the inhabitants of the New World pay little attention to thoſe kinds of labour which occupy a conſiderable part of the members of other ſocieties, and depend, in ſome meaſure, for their ſubſiſtence, and entirely for every article of elegance and luxury, upon the ancient continent. Thus the Europeans have become manufacturers for America, and their induſtry has been greatly augmented by the vaſt demands for ſupplying the wants of extenſive countries, the population of which is continually increaſing. Nor is the influence of this demand confined ſolely to the nations which have a more immediate connection with the American colonies; it is felt in every

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every part of Europe that furniſhes any article exported to them, and gives activity and vigour to the hand of the artiſan in the inland provinces of Germany, as well as to thoſe in Great Britain and other countries, which carry on a direct trade with the New World.

But while the diſcovery and conqueſt of America is allowed to be one principal cauſe of that rapid increaſe of induſtry and wealth, which is conſpicuous in Europe during the two laſt centuries, ſome timid theoriſts have maintained, that throughout the ſame period Europe has been gradually impoveriſhed, by being drained of its treaſure in order to carry on its trade with India. But this apprehenſion has ariſen from inattention to the nature and uſe of the precious metals. They are to be conſidered in two different lights; either as the ſigns which all civilized nations have agreed to employ, in order to eſtimate or repreſent the value both of labour and of all commodities, and thus to facilitate the purchaſe of the former, and the conveyance of the latter from one proprietor to another; or gold and ſilver may be viewed as being themſelves commodities, or articles of commerce, for which ſome equivalent muſt be given by ſuch as wiſh to acquire them. In this light the exportation of the precious metals to the Eaſt ſhould be regarded; for, as the nation by which they are exported muſt purchaſe them with the produce of its own labour and ingenuity, this trade

trade muſt contribute, though not in the ſame obvious and direct manner as that with America, towards augmenting the general induſtry and opulence of Europe. If England, as the price of Mexican and Peruvian dollars which are neceſſary for carrying on its trade with India, muſt give a certain quantity of its woollen or cotton cloth or hard-ware, then the hands of an additional number of manufacturers are rendered active, and work to a certain amount muſt be executed, for which, without this trade, there would not have been any demand. The nation reaps all the benefit ariſing from a new creation of induſtry. With the gold and ſilver which her manufactures have purchaſed in the Weſt, ſhe is enabled to trade in the markets of the Eaſt, and the exportation of treaſure to India, which has been ſo much dreaded, inſtead of impoveriſhing enriches the kingdom.

VIII. It is to the diſcovery of the paſſage to India by the Cape of Good Hope, and to the vigour and ſucceſs with which the Portugueſe proſecuted their conqueſts and eſtabliſhed their dominion there, that Europe has been indebted for its preſervation from the moſt illiberal and humiliating ſervitude that ever oppreſſed poliſhed nations. For this obſervation I am indebted to an Author, whoſe ingenuity has illuſtrated, and whoſe eloquence has adorned the Hiſtory of the Settlements and Commerce of Modern Nations in the Eaſt and Weſt Indies;

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dies[1]; and it appears to me ſo well founded as to merit more ample inveſtigation. A few years after the firſt appearance of the Portugueſe in India, the dominion of the Mameluks was overturned by the irreſiſtible power of the Turkiſh arms, and Egypt and Syria were annexed as provinces to the Ottoman empire. If after this event the commercial intercourſe with India had continued to be carried on in its ancient channels, the Turkiſh Sultans, by being maſters of Egypt and Syria, muſt have poſſeſſed the abſolute command of it, whether the productions of the Eaſt were conveyed by the Red Sea to Alexandria, or were tranſported by land-carriage from the Perſian Gulf to Conſtantinople, and the ports of the Mediterranean. The monarchs who were then at the head of this great empire, were neither deſtitute of abilities to perceive the pre-eminence to which this would have elevated them, nor of ambition to aſpire to it. Selim, the conqueror of the Mameluks, by confirming the ancient privileges of the Venetians in Egypt and Syria, and by his regulations concerning the duties on Indian goods, which I have already mentioned, early diſcovered his ſolicitude to ſecure all the advantages of commerce with the Eaſt to his own dominions. The attention of Solyman the Magnificent, his ſucceſſor, ſeems to have been equally directed towards the ſame object. More enlightened than any monarch of the Ottoman race, he attended to all the tranſactions

[1] M. L'Abbé Raynal.

of

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of the European ſtates, and had obſerved the power as well as opulence to which the republic of Venice had attained by engroſſing the commerce with the Eaſt. He now beheld Portugal riſing towards the ſame elevation by the ſame means. Eager to imitate and to ſupplant them, he formed a ſcheme ſuitable to his character for political wiſdom and the appellation of *Inſtitutor of Rules*, by which the Turkiſh hiſtorians have diſtinguiſhed him, and eſtabliſhed, early in his reign, a ſyſtem of commercial laws in his dominions, by which he hoped to render Conſtantinople the great ſtaple of Indian trade, as it had been in the proſperous ages of the Greek empire [k]. For accompliſhing this ſcheme, however, he did not rely on the operations of laws alone; he fitted out about the ſame time a formidable fleet in the Red Sea, under the conduct of a confidential officer, with ſuch a body of janizaries on board of it, as he deemed ſufficient not only to drive the Portugueſe out of all their new ſettlements in India, but to take poſſeſſion of ſome commodious ſtation in that country; and to erect his ſtandard there. The Portugueſe, by efforts of valour and conſtancy, entitled to the ſplendid ſucceſs with which they were crowned, repulſed this powerful armament in every enterprize it undertook, and compelled the ſhattered remains of the Turkiſh fleet and army to return with ignominy to the harbours

A. D. 1538.

[k] Paruta Hiſt. Venet. lib. vii. p. 589. Sandi Stor. Civil. Venez. part ii. p. 901.

from

SECT. IV. from which they had taken their departure, with the moſt ſanguine hopes of terminating the expedition in a very different manner[1]. Solyman, though he never relinquiſhed the deſign of expelling the Portugueſe from India, and of acquiring ſome eſtabliſhment there, was ſo occupied during the remainder of his reign, by the multiplicity of arduous operations in which an inſatiable ambition involved him, that he never had leiſure to reſume the proſecution of it with vigour.

If either the meaſures of Selim had produced the effect which he expected, or if the more adventurous and extenſive plan of Solyman had been carried into execution, the command of the wealth of India, together with ſuch a marine as the monopoly of trade with that country has, in every age, enabled the power which poſſeſſed it to create and maintain, muſt have brought an acceſſion of force to an empire already formidable to mankind, that would have rendered it altogether irreſiſtible. Europe, at that period, was not in a condition to have defended itſelf againſt the combined exertions of ſuch naval and military power, ſupported by commercial wealth, and under the direction of a monarch whoſe comprehenſive genius was able to derive from each its peculiar advantages, and to employ all with the greateſt effect. Happily for the human race, the

[1] Aſia de Barros, dec. iv. lib. x. c. 1, &c.

despotic system of Turkish government, founded on such illiberal fanaticism as has extinguished science in Egypt, in Assyria, and in Greece, its three favourite mansions in ancient times, was prevented from extending its dominion over Europe, and from suppressing liberty, learning, and taste, when beginning to make successful efforts to revive there, and again to bless, to enlighten, and to polish mankind.

APPENDIX.

I SHALL now endeavour to fulfil an engagement which I came under[a], to make ſome obſervations upon the genius, the manners, and inſtitutions of the people of India, as far as they can be traced from the earlieſt ages to which our knowledge of them extends. Were I to enter upon this wide field with an intention of ſurveying its whole extent; were I to view each object which it preſents to a philoſophical inquirer, under all its different aſpects, it would lead me into reſearches and ſpeculations, not only of immenſe length, but altogether foreign from the ſubject of this Diſquiſition. My inquiries and reflections ſhall therefore be confined to what is intimately connected with the deſign of this work. I ſhall collect the facts which the ancients have tranſmitted to us concerning the inſtitutions peculiar to the natives of India, and by comparing them with what we now know of that country, endeavour to

[a] See page 23.

deduce ſuch concluſions as tend to point out the circumſtances which have induced the reſt of mankind, in every age, to carry on commercial intercourſe to ſo great an extent with that country.

Of this intercourſe there are conſpicuous proofs in the earlieſt periods concerning which hiſtory affords information. Not only the people contiguous to India, but remote nations, ſeem to have been acquainted, from time immemorial, with its commodities, and to have valued them ſo highly, that in order to procure them they undertook fatiguing, expenſive, and dangerous journeys. Whenever men give a decided preference to the commodities of any particular country, this muſt be owing either to its poſſeſſing ſome valuable natural productions peculiar to its ſoil and climate, or to ſome ſuperior progreſs which its inhabitants have made in induſtry, art, and elegance. It is not to any peculiar excellence in the natural productions of India, that we muſt aſcribe entirely the predilection of ancient nations for its commodities; for, pepper excepted, an article, it muſt be allowed, of great importance, they are little different from thoſe of other tropical countries; and Ethiopia or Arabia might have fully ſupplied the Phenicians, and other trading people of antiquity, with the ſpices, the perfumes, the precious ſtones, the gold and ſilver, which formed the principal articles of their commerce.

Whoever

WHOEVER then wiſhes to trace the commerce with India to its ſource, muſt ſearch for it, not ſo much in any peculiarity of the natural productions of that country, as in the ſuperior improvement of its inhabitants. Many facts have been tranſmitted to us, which, if they are examined with proper attention, clearly demonſtrate, that the natives of India were not only more early civilized, but had made greater progreſs in civilization than any other people. Theſe I ſhall endeavour to enumerate, and to place them in ſuch a point of view as may ſerve both to throw light upon the inſtitutions, manners, and arts of the Indians, and to account for the eagerneſs of all nations to obtain the productions of their ingenious induſtry.

BY the ancient Heathen writers, the Indians were reckoned among thoſe races of men which they denominated *Autochthones* or *Aborigines*, whom they conſidered as natives of the ſoil, whoſe origin could not be traced[b]. By the inſpired writers, the wiſdom of the Eaſt, (an expreſſion which is to be underſtood as a deſcription of their extraordinary progreſs in ſcience and arts) was early celebrated[c]. In order to illuſtrate and confirm theſe explicit teſtimonies concerning the ancient and high civilization of the inhabitants of India, I ſhall take a view of their rank and condition as individuals; of their civil policy; of their laws and judicial

[b] Diod. Sic. lib. ii. p. 151. [c] 1 Kings, iv. 31.

proceedings; of their useful and elegant arts; of their sciences; and of their religious institutions; as far as information can be gathered from the accounts of the Greek and Roman writers, compared with what still remains of their ancient acquirements and institutions.

I. From the most ancient accounts of India we learn, that the distinction of ranks and separation of professions were completely established there. This is one of the most undoubted proofs of a society considerably advanced in its progress. Arts in the early stages of social life are so few, and so simple, that each man is sufficiently master of them all, to gratify every demand of his own limited desires. A savage can form his bow, point his arrows, rear his hut, and hollow his canoe, without calling in the aid of any hand more skilful than his own[d]. But when time has augmented the wants of men, the productions of art become so complicated in their structure, or so curious in their fabric, that a particular course of education is requisite towards forming the artist to ingenuity in contrivance and expertness in execution. In proportion as refinement spreads, the distinction of professions increases, and they branch out into more numerous and minute subdivisions. Prior to the records of authentic history, and even before the most remote æra to which their own traditions pretend

[d] Hist. of Amer. vol. iii. 165.

to reach, this ſeparation of profeſſions had not only taken place among the natives of India, but the perpetuity of it was ſecured by an inſtitution, which muſt be conſidered as the fundamental article in the ſyſtem of their policy. The whole body of the people was divided into four orders or caſts. The members of the firſt, deemed the moſt ſacred, had it for their province to ſtudy the principles of religion; to perform its functions; and to cultivate the ſciences. They were the prieſts, the inſtructors, and philoſophers of the nation. The members of the ſecond order were entruſted with the government and defence of the ſtate. In peace they were its rulers and magiſtrates; in war they were the generals who commanded its armies and the ſoldiers who fought its battles. The third was compoſed of huſbandmen and merchants; and the fourth of artiſans, labourers, and ſervants. None of theſe can ever quit his own caſt, or be admitted into another[e]. The ſtation of every individual is unalterably fixed; his deſtiny is irrevocable; and the walk of life is marked out, from which he muſt never deviate. This line of ſeparation is not only eſtabliſhed by civil authority, but confirmed and ſanctioned by religion, and each order or caſt is ſaid to have proceeded from the Divinity in ſuch a different manner, that to mingle and confound them would be deemed an act of moſt

[e] Ayeen Akbery, iii. 81, &c. Sketches relating to the Hiſtory, &c. of the Hindoos, p. 107, &c.

daring impiety[f]. Nor is it between the four different tribes alone that ſuch inſuperable barriers are fixed; the members of each caſt adhere invariably to the profeſſions of their forefathers. From generation to generation, the ſame families have followed, and will always continue to follow, one uniform line of life.

Such arbitrary arrangements of the various members which compoſe a community, ſeem, at firſt view, to be adverſe to improvement either in ſcience or in arts; and by forming around the different orders of men artificial barriers, which it would be impious to paſs, tend to circumſcribe the operations of the human mind within a narrower ſphere than nature has allotted to them. When every man is at full liberty to direct his efforts towards thoſe objects and that end which the impulſe of his own mind prompts him to prefer, he may be expected to attain that high degree of eminence to which the uncontrolled exertions of genius and induſtry naturally conduct. The regulations of Indian policy, with reſpect to the different orders of men, muſt neceſſarily, at ſome times, check genius in its career, and confine to the functions of an inferior caſt, talents fitted to ſhine in an higher ſphere. But the arrangements of civil government are made, not for what is extraordinary, but for what is common; not for the few, but for the many. The object

[f] See NOTE LVIII.

of

of the firſt Indian legiſlators was to employ the moſt effectual means of providing for the ſubſiſtence, the ſecurity, and happineſs of all the members of the community over which they preſided. With this view they ſet apart certain races of men for each of the various profeſſions and arts neceſſary in a well-ordered ſociety, and appointed the exerciſe of them to be tranſmitted from father to ſon in ſucceſſion. This ſyſtem, though extremely repugnant to the ideas which we, by being placed in a very different ſtate of ſociety, have formed, will be found, upon attentive inſpection, better adapted to attain the end in view, than a careleſs obſerver, at firſt ſight, is apt to imagine. The human mind bends to the law of neceſſity, and is accuſtomed not only to accommodate itſelf to the reſtraints which the condition of its nature, or the inſtitutions of its country, impoſe, but to acquieſce in them. From his entrance into life, an Indian knows the ſtation allotted to him, and the functions to which he is deſtined by his birth. The objects which relate to theſe, are the firſt that preſent themſelves to his view. They occupy his thoughts, or employ his hands; and, from his earlieſt years, he is trained to the habit of doing with eaſe and pleaſure, that which he muſt continue through life to do. To this may be aſcribed that high degree of perfection conſpicuous in many of the Indian manufactures; and though veneration for the practices of their anceſtors may check the ſpirit of invention, yet,

by

by adhering to thefe, they acquire fuch an expertnefs and delicacy of hand, that Europeans, with all the advantages of fuperior fcience, and the aid of more complete inftruments, have never been able to equal the exquifite execution of their workmanfhip. While this high improvement of their more curious manufactures excited the admiration, and attracted the commerce of other nations, the feparation of profeffions in India, and the early diftribution of the people into claffes, attached to particular kinds of labour, fecured fuch abundance of the more common and ufeful commodities, as not only fupplied their own wants, but miniftered to thofe of the countries around them.

To this early divifion of the people into cafts, we muft likewife afcribe a ftriking peculiarity in the ftate of India; the permanence of its inftitutions, and the immutability in the manners of its inhabitants. What now is in India always was there, and is likely ftill to continue: neither the ferocious violence and illiberal fanaticifm of its Mahomedan conquerors, nor the power of its European mafters, have effected any confiderable alteration[s]. The fame diftinctions of condition take place, the fame arrangements in civil and domeftic fociety remain, the fame maxims of religion are held in veneration, and the fame fciences and arts are cultivated. Hence, in all ages, the trade with India has been the fame;

[s] See NOTE LIX.

gold

gold and ſilver have uniformly been carried thither in order to purchaſe the ſame commodities, with which it now ſupplies all nations; and from the age of Pliny to the preſent times, it has been always conſidered and execrated as a gulf which ſwallows up the wealth of every other country, that flows inceſſantly towards it, and from which it never returns[h]. According to the accounts which I have given of the cargoes anciently imported from India, they appear to have conſiſted of nearly the ſame articles with thoſe of the inveſtments in our own times; and whatever difference we may obſerve in them ſeems to have ariſen, not ſo much from any diverſity in the nature of the commodities which the Indians prepared for ſale, as from a variety in the taſtes, or in the wants of the nations which demanded them.

II. Another proof of the early and high civilization of the people of India, may be deduced from conſidering their political conſtitution and form of government. The Indians trace back the hiſtory of their own country through an immenſe ſucceſſion of ages, and aſſert, that all Aſia, from the mouth of the Indus on the weſt, to the confines of China on the eaſt, and from the mountains of Thibet on the north, to Cape Comorin on the ſouth, formed a vaſt empire, ſubject to one mighty ſovereign, under whom ruled ſeveral hereditary Princes and Ra-

[h] See NOTE LX.

jahs.

jahs. But their chronology, which meaſures the life of man in ancient times by thouſands of years, and computes the length of the ſeveral periods, during which it ſuppoſes the world to have exiſted, by millions, is ſo wildly extravagant, as not to merit any ſerious diſcuſſion. We muſt reſt ſatisfied, then, until ſome more certain information is obtained with reſpect to the ancient hiſtory of India, with taking the firſt accounts of that country, which can be deemed authentic, from the Greeks who ſerved under Alexander the Great. They found kingdoms of conſiderable magnitude eſtabliſhed in that country. The territories of Porus and of Taxiles comprehended a great part of the Panjab, one of the moſt fertile and beſt cultivated countries in India. The kingdom of the Praſij, or Gandaridæ, ſtretched to a great extent on both ſides of the Ganges. All the three, as appears from the ancient Greek writers, were powerful and populous.

This deſcription of the partition of India into ſtates of ſuch magnitude, is alone a convincing proof of its having advanced far in civilization. In whatever region of the earth there has been an opportunity of obſerving the progreſs of men in ſocial life, they appear at firſt in ſmall independent tribes or communities. Their common wants prompt them to unite; and their mutual jealouſies, as well as the neceſſity of ſecuring ſubſiſtence, compel them to drive to a diſtance every rival who might encroach on thoſe domains which

which they confider as their own. Many ages elapfe before they coalefce, or acquire fufficient forefight to provide for the wants, or fufficient wifdom to conduct the affairs of a numerous fociety, even under the genial climate, and in the rich foil of India, more favourable perhaps to the union and increafe of the human fpecies than any other part of the globe, the formation of fuch extenfive ftates, as were eftablifhed in that country when firft vifited by Europeans, muft have been a work of long time; and the members of them muft have been long accuftomed to exertions of ufeful induftry.

THOUGH monarchical government was eftablifhed in all the countries of India to which the knowledge of the ancients extended, the fovereigns were far from poffeffing uncontrolled or defpotic power. No trace, indeed, is difcovered there, of any affembly, or public body, the members of which, either in their own right, or as repreefentatives of their fellow-citizens, could interpofe in enacting laws, or in fuperintending the execution of them. Inftitutions deftined to affert and guard the rights belonging to men in focial ftate, how familiar foever the idea may be to the people of Europe, never formed a part of the political conftitution in any great Afiatic kingdom. It was to different principles that the natives of India were indebted for reftrictions which limited the exercife of regal power. The rank of individuals was unalterably fixed, and

the privileges of the different caſts were deemed inviolable. The monarchs of India, who were all taken from the ſecond of the four claſſes formerly deſcribed, which is intruſted with the functions of government and exerciſe of war, behold among their ſubjects an order of men far ſuperior to themſelves in dignity, and ſo conſcious of their own pre-eminence, both in rank and in ſanctity, that they would deem it degradation and pollution, if they were to eat of the ſame food with their ſovereign[k]. Their perſons are ſacred, and even for the moſt heinous crimes, they cannot be capitally puniſhed; their blood muſt never be ſhed[l]. To men in this exalted ſtation monarchs muſt look up with reſpect, and reverence them as the miniſters of religion, and the teachers of wiſdom. On important occaſions, it is the duty of ſovereigns to conſult them, and to be directed by their advice. Their admonitions, and even their cenſures, muſt be received with ſubmiſſive reſpect. This right of the Brahmins to offer their opinion with reſpect to the adminiſtration of public affairs was not unknown to the ancients[m]; and in ſome accounts preſerved in India of the events which happened in their own country, princes are mentioned, who, having violated the privileges of the caſts, and diſregarded the remonſtrances of the Brah-

[k] Orme's Diſſert. vol. i. p. 4. Sketches, &c. p. 113.
[l] Code of Gentoo Laws, ch. xxi. § 10. p. 275. 283, &c.
[m] Strabo, lib. xv. p. 1029. C.

mins,

mins, were depoſed by their authority, and put to death [n].

While the ſacred rights of the Brahmins oppoſed a barrier againſt the encroachments of regal power on the one hand, it was circumſcribed on the other by the ideas which thoſe who occupied the higheſt ſtations in ſociety entertained of their own dignity and privileges. As none but the members of the caſt next in rank to that which religion has rendered ſacred, could be employed in any function of the ſtate, the ſovereigns of the extenſive kingdoms anciently eſtabliſhed in India, found it neceſſary to entruſt them with the ſuperintendance of the cities and provinces too remote to be under their own immediate inſpection. In theſe ſtations they often acquired ſuch wealth and influence, that offices conferred during pleaſure, continued hereditarily in their families, and they came gradually to form an intermediate order between the ſovereign and his ſubjects; and, by the vigilant jealouſy with which they maintained their own dignity and privileges, they conſtrained their rulers to reſpect them, and to govern with moderation and equity.

Nor were the benefits of theſe reſtraints upon the power of the ſovereign confined wholly to the two ſuperior orders in the ſtate; they extend-

[n] Account of the Qualities requiſite in a Magiſtrate, prefixed by the Pundits to the Code of Gentoo Laws, p. cii. and cxvi.

ed,

ed, in ſome degree, to the third claſs employed in agriculture. The labours of that numerous and uſeful body of men are ſo eſſential to the preſervation and happineſs of ſociety, that the greateſt attention was paid to render their condition ſecure and comfortable. According to the ideas which prevailed among the natives of India (as we are informed by the firſt Europeans who viſited their country), the ſovereign is conſidered as the ſole univerſal proprietor of all the land in his dominions, and from him is derived every ſpecies of tenure by which his ſubjects can hold it. Theſe lands were let out to the farmers who cultivated them, at a ſtipulated rent, amounting uſually to a fourth part of their annual produce paid in kind*. In a country where the price of work is extremely low, and where the labour of cultivation is very inconſiderable, the earth yielding its productions almoſt ſpontaneouſly, where ſubſiſtence is amazingly cheap, where few clothes are needed, and houſes are built and furniſhed at little expence, this rate cannot be deemed exorbitant or oppreſſive. As long as the huſbandman continued to pay the eſtabliſhed rent, he retained poſſeſſion of the farm, which deſcended, like property, from father to ſon.

These accounts given by ancient authors of the condition and tenure of the renters of land in India, agree ſo perfectly with what now takes place, that it may be conſidered almoſt as a de-

* Strabo, lib. xv. p. 1030. A. Diod. Sic. lib. ii. p. 53.

ſcription

ſcription of the preſent ſtate of its cultivation. In every part of India where the native Hindoo Princes retain dominion, the *Ryots*, the modern name by which the renters of land are diſtinguiſhed, hold their poſſeſſions by a leaſe, which may be conſidered as perpetual, and at a rate fixed by ancient ſurveys and valuations. This arrangement has been ſo long eſtabliſhed, and accords ſo well with the ideas of the natives, concerning the diſtinctions of caſts, and the functions allotted to each, that it has been inviolably maintained in all the provinces ſubject either to Mahomedans or Europeans; and, to both, it ſerves as the baſis on which their whole ſyſtem of finance is founded[p]. In a more remote period, before the original inſtitutions of India were ſubverted by foreign invaders, the induſtry of the huſbandmen, on which every member of the community depended for ſubſiſtence, was as ſecure as the tenure by which he held his lands was equitable. Even war did not interrupt his labours or endanger his property. It was not uncommon, we are informed, that while two hoſtile armies were fighting a battle in one field, the peaſants were ploughing or reaping in the next field in perfect tranquillity[q]. Theſe maxims and regulations of the ancient legiſlators of India have a near reſemblance to the ſyſtem of thoſe ingenious ſpeculators on political œconomy in modern times, who repreſent the produce of land as the ſole ſource of wealth in every country; and who conſider the

[p] See NOTE LX I. [q] Strabo, lib. xv. p. 1030. A.

 diſcovery

diſcovery of this principle, according to which they contend that the government of nations ſhould be conducted, as one of the greateſt efforts of human wiſdom. Under a form of government, which paid ſuch attention to all the different orders of which the ſociety is compoſed, particularly the cultivators of the earth, it is not wonderful that the ancients ſhould deſcribe the Indians as a moſt happy race of men; and that the moſt intelligent modern obſervers ſhould celebrate the equity, the humanity, and mildneſs of Indian policy. A Hindoo Rajah, as I have been informed by perſons well acquainted with the ſtate of India, reſembles more a father preſiding in a numerous family of his own children, than a ſovereign ruling over inferiors, ſubject to his dominion. He endeavours to ſecure their happineſs with vigilant ſolicitude; they are attached to him with the moſt tender affection and inviolable fidelity. We can hardly conceive men to be placed in any ſtate more favourable to their acquiring all the advantages derived from ſocial union. It is only when the mind is perfectly at eaſe, and neither feels nor dreads oppreſſion, that it employs its active powers in forming numerous arrangements of police, for ſecuring its enjoyments and increaſing them. Many arrangements of this nature the Greeks, though accuſtomed to their own inſtitutions, the moſt perfect at that time in Europe, obſerved and admired among the Indians, and mention them as inſtances of high civilization and improvement. There were eſtabliſhed among the

Indians

Indians three diſtinct claſſes of officers, one of which had it in charge to inſpect agriculture, and every kind of country work. They meaſured the portions of land allotted to each renter. They had the cuſtody of the *Tanks*, or public reſervoirs of water, without a regular diſtribution of which, the fields in a torrid climate cannot be rendered fertile. They marked out the courſe of the highways, along which, at certain diſtances, they erected ſtones, to meaſure the road and direct travellers[r]. To officers of a ſecond claſs was committed the inſpection of the police in cities; their functions of courſe, were many and various; ſome of which only I ſhall ſpecify. They appropriated houſes for the reception of ſtrangers; they protected them from injury, provided for their ſubſiſtence, and, when ſeized with any diſeaſe, they appointed phyſicians to attend them; and, on the event of their death, they not only buried them with decency, but took charge of their effects, and reſtored them to their relations. They kept exact regiſters of births and of deaths. They viſited the public markets, and examined weights and meaſures. The third claſs of officers ſuperintended the military department; but, as the objects to which their attention was directed are foreign from the ſubject of my inquiries, it is unneceſſary to enter into any detail with reſpect to them[s].

[r] See NOTE LXII.

[s] Strabo, lib. xv. p. 1034. A. &c. Diod. Sicul. lib. ii. p. 154.

As manners and cuſtoms in India deſcend almoſt without variation from age to age, many of the peculiar inſtitutions which I have enumerated ſtill ſubſiſt there. There is ſtill the ſame attention to the conſtruction and preſervation of tanks, and the diſtribution of their waters. The direction of roads, and placing ſtones along them, is ſtill an object of police. *Choultries*, or houſes built for the accommodation of travellers, are frequent in every part of the country, and are uſeful as well as noble monuments of Indian munificence and humanity. It is only among men in the moſt improved ſtate of ſociety, and under the beſt forms of government, that we diſcover inſtitutions ſimilar to thoſe which I have deſcribed; and many nations have advanced far in their progreſs, without eſtabliſhing arrangements of police equally perfect.

III. In eſtimating the progreſs which any nation has made in civilization, the object that merits the greateſt degree of attention, next to its political conſtitution, is the ſpirit of the laws and nature of the forms by which its judicial proceedings are regulated. In the early and rude ages of ſociety, the few diſputes with reſpect to property which ariſe, are terminated by the interpoſition of the old men, or by the authority of the chiefs in every ſmall tribe or community; their deciſions are dictated by their own diſcretion, or founded on plain and obvious maxims of equity. But as the controverſies multiply, caſes ſimilar to ſuch as have been formerly determined muſt recur, and the awards upon theſe grow gradually

gradually into precedents, which ſerve to regulate future judgments. Thus, long before the nature of property is defined by poſitive ſtatutes, or any rules preſcribed concerning the mode of acquiring or conveying it, there is gradually formed, in every ſtate, a body of cuſtomary or common law, by which judicial proceedings are directed, and every deciſion conformable to it is ſubmitted to with reverence, as the reſult of the accumulated wiſdom and experience of ages.

In this ſtate the adminiſtration of juſtice ſeems to have been in India when firſt viſited by Europeans. Though the Indians, according to their account, had no written laws, but determined every controverted point, by recollecting what had been formerly decided [t]; they aſſert, that juſtice was diſpenſed among them with great accuracy, and that crimes were moſt ſeverely puniſhed [u]. But in this general obſervation is contained all the intelligence which the ancients furniſh concerning the nature and forms of judicial proceedings in India. From the time of Megaſthenes, no Greek or Roman of any note appears to have reſided long enough in the country, or to have been ſo much acquainted with the cuſtoms of the natives, as to be capable of entering into any detail with reſpect to a point of ſo great importance in their policy. Fortunately, the defects of their information have been amply ſupplied by the more accurate and

[t] Strabo, lib. xv. 1035. D.
[u] Diod. Sicul. lib. ii. p. 154.

extenſive reſearches of the moderns. During the courſe of almoſt three centuries, the number of perſons who have reſorted from Europe to India has been great. Many of them, who have remained long in the country, and were perſons of liberal education and enlarged minds, have lived in ſuch familiar intercourſe with the natives, and acquired ſo competent a knowledge of their languages, as enabled them to obſerve their inſtitutions with attention, and to deſcribe them with fidelity. Reſpectable as their authority may be, I ſhall not, in what I offer for illuſtrating the judicial proceedings of the Hindoos, reſt upon it alone, but ſhall derive my information from ſources higher and more pure.

Towards the middle of the ſixteenth century, Akber the Sixth, in deſcent from Tamerlane, mounted the throne of Indoſtan. He is one of the few ſovereigns entitled to the appellation both of Great and Good, and the only one of Mahomedan race, whoſe mind appears to have ariſen ſo far above all the illiberal prejudices of that fanatical religion in which he was educated, as to be capable of forming a plan worthy of a monarch who loved his people, and was ſolicitous to render them happy. As, in every province of his extenſive dominions, the Hindoos formed the great body of his ſubjects, he laboured to acquire a perfect knowledge of their religion, their ſciences, their laws, and inſtitutions; in order that he might conduct every part of his government, particularly the adminiſtration of

juſtice, in a manner as much accommodated as poſſible to their own ideas[x]. In this generous undertaking he was ſeconded with zeal by his vizier Abul Fazel, a miniſter whoſe underſtanding was not leſs enlightened than that of his maſter. By their aſſiduous reſearches, and conſultation of learned men[y], ſuch information was obtained as enabled Abul Fazel to publiſh a brief compendium of Hindoo juriſprudence in the Ayeen Akbery[z], which may be conſidered as the firſt genuine communication of its principles to perſons of a different religion. About two centuries afterwards, the illuſtrious example of Akber was imitated and ſurpaſſed by Mr. Haſtings, the Governor General of the Britiſh Settlements in India. By his authority, and under his inſpection, the moſt eminent Pundits, or Brahmins learned in the laws, of the provinces over which he preſided, were aſſembled at Calcutta; and, in the courſe of two years, compiled, from their moſt ancient and approved authors, ſentence by ſentence, without addition or diminution, a full code of Hindoo laws[a]; which is, undoubtedly, the moſt valuable and authentic elucidation of Indian policy and manners that has been hitherto communicated to Europe. A.D. 1773.

According to the Pundits, ſome of the writers upon whoſe authority they found the decrees which they have inſerted in the Code, lived ſe-

[x] See NOTE LXIII.

[y] Ayeen Akbery, A. vol. iii. p. 95.

[z] Vol. iii. p. 197, &c. [a] Preface to the Code, p. x.

veral millions of years before their time[b]; and they boaſt of having a ſucceſſion of expounders of their laws from that period to the preſent. Without entering into any examination of what is ſo extravagant, we may conclude, that the Hindoos have in their poſſeſſion treatiſes concerning the laws and juriſprudence of their country, of more remote antiquity than are to be found in any other nation. The truth of this depends not upon their own teſtimony alone, but it is put beyond doubt by one circumſtance, that all theſe treatiſes are written in the Sanſkreet language, which has not been ſpoken for many ages in any part of Indoſtan, and is now underſtood by none but the moſt learned Brahmins. That the Hindoos were a people highly civilized, at the time when their laws were compoſed, is moſt clearly eſtabliſhed by internal evidence contained in the Code itſelf. Among nations beginning to immerge from barbariſm, the regulations of law are extremely ſimple, and applicable only to a few obvious caſes of daily occurrence. Men muſt have been long united in a ſocial ſtate, their tranſactions muſt have been numerous and complex, and judges muſt have determined an immenſe variety of controverſies to which theſe give riſe, before the ſyſtem of law becomes ſo voluminous and comprehenſive as to direct the judicial proceedings of a nation far advanced in improvement. In that early age of the Roman republic, when the laws of the Twelve Tables were promulgated, nothing more was required than the laconic

[b] Preface to the Code, p. xxxviii.

injunc-

injunctions which they contain for regulating the decisions of courts of justice; but, in a later period, the body of civil law, ample as its contents are, was found hardly sufficient for that purpose. To the jejune brevity of the Twelve Tables, the Hindoo Code has no resemblance, but with respect to the number and variety of points it considers, it will bear a comparison with the celebrated Digest of Justinian; or with the systems of jurisprudence in nations most highly civilized. The articles of which the Hindoo Code is composed, are arranged in natural and luminous order. They are numerous and comprehensive, and investigated with that minute attention and discernment which are natural to a people distinguished for acuteness and subtility of understanding, who have been long accustomed to the accuracy of judicial proceedings, and acquainted with all the refinements of legal practice. The decisions concerning every point (with a few exceptions occasioned by local prejudices and peculiar customs) are founded upon the great and immutable principles of justice which the human mind acknowledges and respects, in every age, and in all parts of the earth. Whoever examines the whole work, cannot entertain a doubt of its containing the jurisprudence of an enlightened and commercial people. Whoever looks into any particular title, will be surprised with a minuteness of detail and nicety of distinction, which, in many instances, seem to go beyond the attention of European legislation; and it is remarkable that some of the regulations which indicate the greatest

greateſt degree of refinement, were eſtabliſhed in periods of the moſt remote antiquity. "In the "firſt of the ſacred law tracts, (as is obſerved by "a perſon to whom Oriental literature, in all its "branches, has been greatly indebted,) which "the Hindoos ſuppoſe to have been revealed by "Menu ſome millions of years ago, there is a "curious paſſage on the legal intereſt of money, "and the limited rate of it in different caſes, with "an exception in regard to adventures at ſea; "an exception which the ſenſe of mankind ap-"proves, and which commerce abſolutely re-"quires, though it was not before the reign of "Charles I. that our Engliſh juriſprudence fully "admitted it in reſpect of maritime contracts[c]." It is likewiſe worthy of notice, that though the natives of India have been diſtinguiſhed in every age for the humanity and mildneſs of their diſpoſition, yet ſuch is the ſolicitude of their law-givers to preſerve the order and tranquillity of ſociety, that the puniſhments which they inflict on criminals are (agreeably to an obſervation of the ancients already mentioned) extremely rigorous. "Puniſhment (according to a ſtriking perſonifi-"cation in the Hindoo Code) is the magiſtrate; "puniſhment is the inſpirer of terror; puniſh-"ment is the nouriſher of the ſubjects; puniſh-"ment is the defender from calamity; puniſh-"ment is the guardian of thoſe that ſleep; "puniſhment, with a black aſpect and a red eye, "terrifies the guilty[d]."

[c] Sir Wm. Jones's Third Diſcourſe, Aſiat. Reſearch. p. 428.
[d] Code, ch. xxi. § 8.

IV. As

IV. As the condition of the ancient inhabitants of India, whether we confider them as individuals or as members of fociety, appears, from the preceding inveftigation, to have been extremely favourable to the cultivation of ufeful and elegant arts; we are naturally led to enquire, whether the progrefs which they actually made in them, was fuch as might have been expected from a people in that fituation. In attempting to trace this progrefs we have not the benefit of guidance equal to that which conducted our refearches concerning the former articles of inquiry. The ancients, from their flender acquaintance with the interior ftate of India, have been able to communicate little information with refpect to the arts cultivated there; and though the moderns, during their continued intercourfe with India for three centuries, have had accefs to obferve them with greater attention, it is of late only, that by ftudying the languages now and formerly fpoken in India, and by confulting and tranflating their moft eminent authors, they have begun to enter into that path of inquiry which leads with certainty to a thorough knowledge of the ftate of arts cultivated in that country.

One of the firft arts which human ingenuity aimed at improving, beyond what mere neceffity requires, was that of building. In the brief remarks which the fubject of my inquiries leads me to make on the progrefs of this art in India, I fhall confine my attention wholly to thofe of higheft antiquity. The moft durable monuments

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of human induſtry are public buildings. The productions of art, formed for the common purpoſes of life, waſte and periſh in uſing them; but works deſtined for the benefit of poſterity ſubſiſt through ages, and it is according to the manner in which theſe are executed, that we form a judgment with reſpect to the degree of power, ſkill, and improvement to which the people by whom they were erected had attained. In every part of India monuments of high antiquity are found. Theſe are of two kinds, ſuch as were conſecrated to the offices of religion, or fortreſſes built for the ſecurity of the country. In the former of theſe, to which Europeans, whatever their ſtructure may be, give the general name of *Pagodas*, we may obſerve a diverſity of ſtile, which both marks the gradual progreſs of architecture, and throws light on the general ſtate of arts and manners in different periods. The moſt early Pagodas appear to have been nothing more than excavations in mountainous parts of the country, formed probably in imitation of the natural caverns to which the firſt inhabitants of the earth retired for ſafety during the night, and where they found ſhelter from the inclemency of the ſeaſons. The moſt celebrated, and, as there is reaſon to believe, the moſt ancient of all theſe, is the Pagoda in the iſland Elephanta, at no great diſtance from Bombay. It has been hewn by the hands of man out of a ſolid rock, about half way up a high mountain, and formed into a ſpacious area, nearly 120 feet ſquare. In order to ſupport the roof, and the weight of the mountain that lies above

above it, a number of maſſy pillars, and of a form not inelegant, have been cut out of the ſame rock, at ſuch regular diſtances, as on the firſt entrance preſents to the eye of the ſpectator an appearance both of beauty and of ſtrength. Great part of the inſide is covered with human figures in high relief, of gigantic ſize as well as ſingular forms, and diſtinguiſhed by a variety of ſymbols, repreſenting, it is probable, the attributes of the deities whom they worſhipped, or the actions of the heroes whom they admired. In the iſle of Salſette, ſtill nearer to Bombay, are excavations in a ſimilar ſtile, hardly inferior in magnificence, and deſtined for the ſame religious purpoſes.

These ſtupendous works are of ſuch high antiquity, that as the natives cannot, either from hiſtory or tradition, give any information concerning the time in which they were executed, they univerſally aſcribe the formation of them to the power of ſuperior beings. From the extent and grandeur of theſe ſubterraneous manſions, which intelligent travellers compare to the moſt celebrated monuments of human power and art in any part of the earth, it is manifeſt that they could not have been formed in that ſtage of ſocial life where men continue divided into ſmall tribes, unaccuſtomed to the efforts of perſevering induſtry. It is only in States of conſiderable extent, and among people long habituated to ſubordination, and to act with concert, that the idea of ſuch magnificent works is conceived,

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or the power of accomplifhing them can be found.

That fome fuch powerful ftate was eftablifhed in India at the time when the excavations in the iflands of Elephanta and Salfette were formed, is not the only conclufion to be drawn from a furvey of them; the ftile in which the fculptures with which they are adorned is executed, indicates a confiderable improvement in art at that early period. Sculpture is the imitative art in which man feems to have made the firft trial of his own talents. But even in thofe countries where it has attained to the higheft degree of perfection, its progrefs has been extremely flow. Whoever has attended to the hiftory of this art in Greece, knows how far removed the firft rude effay to reprefent the human form, was from any complete delineation of it[c]. But the different groupes of figures which ftill remain entire in the Pagoda of Elephanta, however low they muft rank if they be compared with the more elegant works of Grecian or even Etrufcan artifts, are finifhed in a ftile confiderably fuperior to the hard inexpreffive manner of the Egyptians, or to the figures in the celebrated palace of Perfepolis. In this light they have appeared to perfons abundantly qualified to appreciate their merit, and from different drawings, particularly thofe of Niebuhr, a traveller equally accurate in obferving, and faithful in defcribing,

[c] Winkelman's Hift. de l'Art. chez les Anciens, tom. i. p. 32, &c.

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we muſt form a favourable opinion of the ſtate of arts in India at that period.

It is worthy of notice, that although ſeveral of the figures in the caverns at Elephanta be ſo different from thoſe now exhibited in the Pagodas as objects of veneration, that ſome learned Europeans have imagined they repreſent the rites of a religion more ancient than that now eſtabliſhed in Indoſtan, yet by the Hindoos themſelves the caverns are conſidered as hallowed places of their own worſhip, and they ſtill reſort thither to perform their devotions, and honour the figures there, in the ſame manner with thoſe in their own Pagodas. In confirmation of this, I have been informed by an intelligent obſerver, who viſited this ſubterraneous ſanctuary, in the year 1782, that he was accompanied by a ſagacious Brahmin, a native of Benares, who, though he had never been in it before that time, recognized, at once, all the figures; was well acquainted with the parentage, education, and life of every deity or human perſonage there repreſented, and explained with fluency the meaning of the various ſymbols by which the images were diſtinguiſhed. This may be conſidered as a clear proof that the ſyſtem of mythology now prevalent in Benares, is not different from that delineated in the caverns of Elephanta. Mr. Hunter, who viſited Elephanta in the year 1784, ſeems to conſider the figures there as repreſenting deities who are ſtill objects of worſhip among

among the Hindoos[f]. One circumſtance ſerves to confirm the juſtneſs of this opinion. Several of the moſt conſpicuous perſonages in the groupes at Elephanta are decorated with the *Zennar*, the ſacred ſtring or cord peculiar to the order of Brahmins, an authentic evidence of the diſtinction of caſts having been eſtabliſhed in India, at the time when theſe works were finiſhed.

2. Instead of caverns, the original places of worſhip, which could be formed only in particular ſituations, the devotion of the people ſoon began to raiſe temples in honour of their deities in other parts of India. The ſtructure of theſe was at firſt extremely ſimple. They were pyramids of large dimenſion, and had no light within but what came from a ſmall door. After having been long accuſtomed to perform all the rites of religion in the gloom of caverns, the Indians were naturally led to conſider the ſolemn darkneſs of ſuch a manſion as ſacred. Some Pagodas in this firſt ſtile of building ſtill remain in Indoſtan. Drawings of two of theſe at Deogur, and of a third near Tanjore in the Carnatic, all fabrics of great antiquity, have been publiſhed by Mr. Hodges[g], and though they are rude ſtructures, they are of ſuch magnitude as muſt have required the power of ſome conſiderable ſtate to rear them.

[f] Archæologia, vol. vii. p. 286, &c.

[g] N° VI.

3. In proportion to the progreſs of the different countries of India in opulence and refinement, the ſtructure of their temples gradually improved. From plain buildings they became highly ornamented fabrics, and, both by their extent and magnificence, are monuments of the power and taſte of the people by whom they were erected. In this highly finiſhed ſtile there are Pagodas of great antiquity in different parts of Indoſtan, particularly in the ſouthern provinces, which were not expoſed to the deſtructive violence of Mahomedan zeal[h]. In order to aſſiſt my readers in forming ſuch an idea of theſe buildings as may enable them to judge with reſpect to the early ſtate of arts in India, I ſhall briefly deſcribe two, of which we have the moſt accurate accounts. The entry to the Pagoda of Chillambrum near Porto Novo on the Coromandel coaſt, held in high veneration on account of its antiquity, is by a ſtately gate under a pyramid an hundred and twenty-two feet in height, built with large ſtones above forty feet long, and more than five feet ſquare, and all covered with plates of copper, adorned with an immenſe variety of figures neatly executed. The whole ſtructure extends one thouſand three hundred and thirty-two feet in one direction, and nine hundred and thirty-ſix in another. Some of the ornamental parts are finiſhed with an elegance entitled to the admiration of the

[h] See NOTE LXIV.

moſt ingenious artiſts[1]. The Pagoda of Seringham, ſuperior in ſanctity to that of Chillambrum, ſurpaſſes it as much in grandeur; and fortunately I can convey a more perfect idea of it by adopting the words of an elegant and accurate hiſtorian. This Pagoda is ſituated about a mile from the weſtern extremity of the iſland of Seringham, formed by the diviſion of the great river Caveri into two channels. "It is compoſed of ſeven "ſquare incloſures, one within the other, the "walls of which are twenty-five feet high, and "four thick. Theſe incloſures are three hundred "and fifty feet diſtant from one another, and "each has four large gates, with a high tower; "which are placed, one in the middle of each ſide "of the incloſure, and oppoſite to the four car-"dinal points. The outward wall is near four "miles in circumference, and its gateway to the "ſouth is ornamented with pillars, ſeveral of "which are ſingle ſtones thirty-three feet long, "and nearly five in diameter; and thoſe which "form the roof are ſtill larger; in the inmoſt in-"cloſures are the chapels. About half a mile to "the eaſt of Seringham, and nearer to the Caveri "than the Coleroon, is another large Pagoda, "called Jembikiſma; but this has only one inclo-"ſure. The extreme veneration in which Se-"ringham is held, ariſes from a belief that it con-"tains that identical image of the god Wiſtchnu, "which uſed to be worſhipped by the god

[1] Mem. de Literat. tom. xxxii. p. 44, &c. Voy. de M. Somerat tom. i. p. 217.

"Brahma.

" Brahma. Pilgrims from all parts of the penin-
" ſula come here to obtain abſolution, and none
" come without an offering of money; and a
" large part of the revenue of the iſland is allot-
" ted for the maintenance of the Brahmins who
" inhabit the Pagoda; and theſe, with their fa-
" milies, formerly compoſed a multitude not leſs
" than forty thouſand ſouls, maintained, with-
" out labour, by the liberality of ſuperſtition.
" Here, as in all the other great Pagodas of In-
" dia, the Brahmins live in a ſubordination which
" knows no reſiſtance, and ſlumber in a volup-
" tuouſneſs which knows no wants[k]."

The other ſpecies of public buildings which I mentioned, were thoſe erected for the defence of the country. From the immenſe plains of Indoſtan, there ariſe, in different parts, eminences and rocks formed by nature to be places of ſtrength. Of theſe the natives early took poſſeſſion, and fortifying them with works of various kinds, rendered them almoſt impregnable ſtations. There ſeems to have been, in ſome diſtant age, a period of general turbulence and danger in India, when ſuch retreats was deemed eſſentially neceſſary to public ſafety; for among the duties of magiſtrates preſcribed by the Pundits, one is, " that
" he ſhall erect a ſtrong fort in the place where
" he chuſes to reſide; and ſhall build a wall on
" all the four ſides of it, with towers and battle-

[k] Orme's Hiſt. of Milit. Tranſact. of Indoſtan, vol. i. p. 178.

"ments, and ſhall make a full ditch around it[l]." Of theſe fortreſſes ſeveral remain, which, both from the appearance of the buildings, and from the tradition of the natives, muſt have been conſtructed in very remote times. Mr. Hodges has publiſhed views of three of theſe, one of Chunar Gur, ſituated upon the river Ganges, about ſixteen miles above the city of Benares[m]; the ſecond, of Gwallior, about eighty miles to the ſouth of Agra[n]; the third of Bidjegur, in the territory of Benares[o]. They are all, particularly Gwallior, works of conſiderable magnitude and ſtrength. The fortreſſes in Bengal, however, are not to be compared with ſeveral in the Deccan. Aſſeergur, Burhampour, and Dowlatabad, are deemed by the natives to be impregnable[p]; and I am aſſured by a good judge, that Aſſeergur is indeed a moſt ſtupendous work, and ſo advantageouſly ſituated, that it would be extremely difficult to reduce it by force. Adoni, of which Tippoo Sultaun lately rendered himſelf maſter, is not inferior to any of them, either in ſtrength or importance[q].

Nor is it only from ſurveying their public works that we are juſtified in aſſerting the early proficiency of the Indians in elegant and uſeful

[l] Introd. to Code of Gentoo Laws, p. cxi.
[m] N° I. [n] N° II. [o] N° III.
[p] Rennell, Mem. p. 133. 139.
[q] Hiſtorical and Political View of the Deccan, p. 13.

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arts: we are led to form the ſame conclufion by a view of thofe productions of their ingenuity, which were the chief articles of their trade with foreign nations. Of thefe the labours of the Indian loom and needle have, in every age, been the moft celebrated; and fine linen is conjectured with fome probability, to have been called by the ancients *Sindon*, from the name of the river Indus or Sindus, near which it was wrought in the higheft perfection[r]. The cotton manufactures of India feem anciently to have been as much admired as they are at prefent, not only for their delicate texture, but for the elegance with which fome of them are embroidered, and the beautiful colour of the flowers with which others are adorned. From the earlieft period of European intercourfe with India, that country has been diftinguifhed for the number and excellence of the fubftances for dying various colours, with which it abounded[s]. The dye of the deep blue colour in higheft eftimation among the Romans, bore the name of *Indicum*[t]. From India, too, the fubftance ufed in dying a bright red colour, feems to have been imported[u]; and it is well known that both in the cotton and filk ftuffs which we now receive from India, the blue

[r] Sir William Jones's Third Difcourfe, p. 428.

[s] Strab. lib. xv. p. 1018. A. 1024. B.

[t] Plin. Nat. Hift. lib. xxxv. c. 6. § 27.

[u] Salmafius Exercit. Plinianæ in Solin. 18, &c. 810. Salmafius de Homionymis Hyles Jatrica, c. 107. See NOTE LXV.

and the red are the colours of moſt conſpicuous luſtre and beauty. But however much the ancients may have admired theſe productions of Indian art, ſome circumſtances, which I have already mentioned, rendered their demand for the cotton manufactures of India far inferior to that of modern times; and this has occaſioned the information concerning them which we receive from the Greek and Roman writers to be very imperfect. We may conclude, however, from the wonderful reſemblance of the ancient ſtate of India to the modern, that, in every period, the productions of their looms were as various as beautiful. The ingenuity of the Indians in other kinds of workmanſhip, particularly in metals and in ivory, is mentioned with praiſe by ancient authors, but without any particular deſcription of their nature[x]. Of theſe early productions of Indian artiſts, there are now ſome ſpecimens in Europe, from which it appears that they were acquainted with the method of engraving upon the hardeſt ſtones and gems; and, both in the elegance of their deſigns and in neatneſs of execution, had arrived at a conſiderable degree of excellence. An ingenious writer maintains, that the art of engraving on gems was probably an Indian invention, and certainly was early improved there, and he ſupports this opinion by ſeveral plauſible arguments[y]. The In-

[x] Strabo, lib. xv. p. 1044. B. Dionyſ. Perieges, verſ. 1016.

[y] Raſpe's Introd. to Taſſie's Deſcript. Catal. of engraved gems, &c. p. xii. &c.

dian

dian engraved gems of which he has publiſhed deſcriptions, appear to be the workmanſhip of a very remote period, as the legends on them are in the Sanſkreet language[z].

But it is not alone from the improved ſtate of mechanic arts in India, that we conclude its inhabitants to have been highly civilized; a proof of this, ſtill more convincing, may be deduced from the early and extraordinary productions of their genius in the fine arts. This evidence is rendered more intereſting, by being derived from a ſource of knowledge which the laudable curioſity of our countrymen has opened to the people of Europe within theſe few years. That all the ſcience and literature poſſeſſed by the Brahmins, were contained in books written in a language underſtood by a few only of the moſt learned among them, is a fact which has long been known; and all the Europeans ſettled in India during three centuries, have complained that the Brahmins obſtinately refuſed to inſtruct any perſon in this language. But at length, by addreſs, mild treatment, and a perſuaſion, that the earneſtneſs with which inſtruction was ſolicited, proceeded not from any intention of turning their religion into deriſion, but from a deſire of acquiring a perfect knowledge of their ſciences and literature, the ſcruples of the Brahmins have been overcome. Several Britiſh

[z] Raſpe's Introd. to Taſſie's Deſcript. Catal. of engraved gems, vol. i. p. 74. vol. ii. plate xiii.

gentlemen are now completely maſters of the Sanſkreet language. The myſterious veil, formerly deemed impenetrable, is removed; and in the courſe of five years, the curioſity of the public has been gratified by two publications as ſingular as they were unexpected. The one is a tranſlation by Mr. Wilkins, of an Epiſode from the *Mahabarat*, an epic poem in high eſtimation among the Hindoos, compoſed according to their account by Kreeſhna Dwypayen Veias, the moſt eminent of all their Brahmins, above three thouſand years before the Chriſtian æra. The other is *Sacontala*, a dramatic poem, written about a century before the birth of Chriſt, tranſlated by Sir W. Jones. I ſhall endeavour to give my readers ſuch a view of the ſubject and compoſition of each of theſe, as may enable them to eſtimate, in ſome meaſure, the degree of merit which they poſſeſs.

The Mahabarat is a voluminous poem, conſiſting of upwards of four hundred thouſand lines. Mr. Wilkins has tranſlated more than a third of it; but only a ſhort epiſode, intitled Baghvat-Geeta, is hitherto publiſhed, and from this ſpecimen we muſt form an opinion with reſpect to the whole. The ſubject of the poem is a famous civil war between two branches of the royal houſe of Bhaurat. When the forces on each ſide were formed in the field, and ready to decide the contest by the ſword, Arjoon, the favourite and pupil of the god Kreeſhna, who accompanied him

him in this hour of danger, requeſted of him to cauſe his chariot to advance between the two hoſtile armies. He looked at both armies, and beheld, on either ſide, none but grandſires, uncles, couſins, tutors, ſons, and brothers, near relations or boſom friends; and when he had gazed for a while, and ſaw theſe prepared for the fight, he was ſeized with extreme pity and compunction, and uttered his ſorrow in the following words:—" Having beheld, O *Kreeſhna!* my " kindred thus waiting anxious for the fight, my " members fail me, my countenance withereth, " the hair ſtandeth an end upon my body, and " all my frame trembleth with horror; even " *Gandeev*, my bow eſcapeth from my hand, and " my ſkin is parched and dried up.—When I " have deſtroyed my kindred, ſhall I longer " look for happineſs? I wiſh not for victory, " *Kreeſhna;* I want not dominion; I want not " pleaſure; for what is dominion and the en- " joyments of life, or even life itſelf, when thoſe " for whom dominion, pleaſure, and enjoyment " were to be coveted, have abandoned life and " fortune, and ſtand here in the field ready for " the battle. Tutors, ſons, and fathers, grand- " ſires, and grandſons, uncles, nephews, couſins, " kindred, and friends! Although they would " kill me, I wiſh not to fight them; no not " even for the dominion of the three regions of " the univerſe, much leſs for this little earth[a]."

[a] Baghvat-Geeta, p. 30, 31.

In

In order to remove his ſcruples, Kreeſhna informs him what was the duty of a prince of the Chehteree or military caſt, when called to act in ſuch a ſituation, and incites him to perform it by a variety of moral and philoſophical arguments, the nature of which I ſhall have occaſion to conſider particularly in another part of this Diſſertation. In this dialogue between Kreeſhna and his pupil, there are ſeveral paſſages which give an high idea of the genius of the poet. The ſpeech of Arjoon I have quoted, in which he expreſſes the anguiſh of his ſoul, muſt have ſtruck every reader as beautiful and pathetic; and I ſhall afterwards produce a deſcription of the Supreme Being, and of the reverence wherewith he ſhould be worſhipped, which is ſublime. But while theſe excite our admiration, and confirm us in the belief of a high degree of civilization in that country where ſuch a work was produced, we are ſurpriſed at the defect of taſte and of art in the manner of introducing this Epiſode. Two powerful armies are drawn up in battle-array, eager for the fight; a young hero and his inſtructor are deſcribed as ſtanding in a chariot of war between them; that ſurely was not the moment for teaching him the principles of philoſophy, and delivering eighteen lectures of metaphyſics and theology.

With regard, however, both to the dramatic and epic poetry of the Hindoos, we labour under the diſadvantage of being obliged to form an opinion from a ſingle ſpecimen of each, and that of the

the latter, too, (as it is only a part of a large work,) an imperfect one. But if, from ſuch ſcanty materials, we may venture upon any deciſion, it muſt be, that of the two, the drama ſeems to have been conducted with the moſt correct taſte. This will appear from the obſervations which I now proceed to make upon Sacontala.

It is only to nations conſiderably advanced in refinement, that the drama is a favourite entertainment. The Greeks had been for a good time a poliſhed people; Alcæus and Sappho had compoſed their Odes, and Thales and Anaximander had opened their ſchools, before tragedy made its firſt rude eſſay in the cart of Theſpis; and a good time elapſed before it attained to any conſiderable degree of excellence. From the drama of Sacontala, then, we muſt form an advantageous idea of the ſtate of improvement in that ſociety to whoſe taſte it was ſuited. In eſtimating its merit, however, we muſt not apply to it rules of criticiſm drawn from the literature and taſte of nations with which its author was altogether unacquainted; we muſt not expect the unities of the Greek theatre; we muſt not meaſure it by our own ſtandard of propriety. Allowance muſt be made for local cuſtoms, and ſingular manners, ariſing from a ſtate of domeſtic ſociety, an order of civil policy, and a ſyſtem of religious opinions, very different from thoſe eſtabliſhed in Europe. Sacontala is not a regular drama, but, like ſome of the plays early exhibited on the Spaniſh and

Engliſh

Engliſh theatres, is an hiſtory in dialogue, unfolding events which happened in different places, and during a ſeries of years. When viewed in this light, the fable is in general well arranged, many of the incidents are happily choſen, and the viciſſitudes in the ſituation of the principal perſonages are ſudden and unexpected. The unravelling of the piece, however, though ſome of the circumſtances preparatory to it be introduced with ſkill, is at laſt brought about by the intervention of ſuperior beings, which has always a bad effect, and diſcovers ſome want of art. But as Sacontala was deſcended of a celeſtial nymph, and under the protection of a holy hermit, this heavenly interpoſition may appear leſs marvellous, and is extremely agreeable to the Oriental taſte. In many places of this drama it is ſimple and tender, in ſome pathetic; in others there is a mixture of comic with what is more ſerious. Of each, examples might be given. I ſhall ſelect a few of the firſt, both becauſe ſimplicity and tenderneſs are the characteriſtic beauties of the piece, and becauſe they ſo little reſemble the extravagant imagery and turgid ſtyle conſpicuous in almoſt all the ſpecimens of Oriental poetry which have hitherto been publiſhed.

Sacontala, the heroine of the drama, a princeſs of high birth, had been educated by an holy hermit in a hallowed grove, and had paſſed the early part of her life in rural occupations and paſtoral innocence. When ſhe was about to quit this

this beloved retreat, and repair to the court of a great monarch, to whom ſhe had been married, Cana, her foſter-father, and her youthful companions, thus bewail their own loſs, and expreſs their wiſhes for her happineſs, in a ſtrain of ſentiment and language perfectly ſuited to their paſtoral character.

" Hear, O ye trees, of this hallowed foreſt, " hear and proclaim that Sacontala is going to " the palace of her wedded lord; ſhe who drank " not, though thirſty, before you were watered; " ſhe, who cropped not, through affection for " you, one of your freſh leaves, though ſhe " would have been pleaſed with ſuch an orna- " ment for her locks; ſhe, whoſe chief delight " was in the ſeaſon when your branches are " ſpangled with flowers!

Chorus of Wood Nymphs. — " May her way be " attended with proſperity! May propitious " breezes ſprinkle, for her delight, the odorifer- " ous duſt of rich bloſſoms! May pools of clear " water, green with the leaves of the lotos, re- " freſh her as ſhe walks! and may ſhady " branches be her defence from the ſcorching " ſun-beams!"

Sacontala, juſt as ſhe was departing from the grove, turns to Cana: " Suffer me, venerable fa- " ther, to addreſs this Madhavi-creeper, whoſe " red bloſſoms inflame the grove.—*Cana.* " My " child, I kuow thy affection for it.——*Sacont.* " O moſt

" O moſt radiant of ſhining plants, receive my
" embraces, and return them with thy flexible
" arms! from this day, though removed at a
" fatal diſtance, I ſhall for ever be thine.—O be-
" loved father conſider this creeper as myſelf!"
As ſhe advances, ſhe again addreſſes Cana:
" Father! when yon female antelope, who now
" moves ſlowly from the weight of the young
" ones with which ſhe is pregnant, ſhall be deli-
" vered of them, ſend me, I beg, a kind meſſage
" with tidings of her ſafety.—Do not forget."
——*Cana.* " My beloved! I will not forget it."
——*Sacontala* [*ſtopping*]. " Ah! what is it that
" clings to the ſkirts of my robe and detains me!"
——*Cana.* " It is thy adopted child, the little
" fawn, whoſe mouth, when the ſharp points of
" Cuſa graſs had wounded it, has been ſo often
" ſmeared by thee with the healing oil of In-
" gudi; who has been ſo often fed by thee with
" a handful of Synmaka grains, and now will
" not leave the footſteps of his protectreſs."——
Sacont. " Why doſt thou weep, tender fawn,
" for me who muſt leave our common dwelling-
" place?—As thou waſt reared by me when thou
" hadſt loſt thy mother, who died ſoon after thy
" birth, ſo will my foſter-father attend thee,
" when we are ſeparated, with anxious care.—
" Return, poor thing, return——we muſt part."
[*She burſt into tears.*]——*Cana.* " Thy tears,
" my child, ill ſuit the occaſion; we ſhall all
" meet again; be firm; ſee the direct road be-
" fore thee, and follow it. When the big tear
" lurks beneath thy beautiful eye-laſhes, let thy

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receive from the Greeks and Romans, of the
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"rope. They are all in verſe where the dialogue "is elevated, and in proſe where it is familiar; "the men of rank and learning are repreſented "ſpeaking pure Sanſkreet, and the women Pra-"crit, which is little more than the language of "the Brahmins, melted down by a delicate ar-"ticulation to the ſoftneſs of Italian; while the "low perſons of the drama ſpeak the vulgar dia-"lects of the ſeveral provinces which they are "ſuppoſed to inhabit[d]."

V. The attainments of the Indians in ſcience, furniſh an additional proof of their early civilization. By every perſon who has viſited India in ancient or modern times, its inhabitants either in tranſactions of private buſineſs, or in the conduct of political affairs, have been deemed not inferior to the people of any nation in ſagacity or in acuteneſs of underſtanding. From the application of ſuch talents to the cultivation of ſcience, an extraordinary degree of proficiency might have been expected. The Indians were, accordingly, early celebrated on that account, and ſome of the moſt eminent of the Greek philoſophers, travelled into India, that, by converſing with the ſages of that country, they might acquire ſome portion of the knowledge for which they were diſtinguiſhed[e]. The accounts, however, which

[d] Preface to Sacont. by Sir William Jones, p. ix. See NOTE LXVI.

[e] Brukeri Hiſt. Philoſoph. vol. i. p. 190.

we receive from the Greeks and Romans, of the Sciences which attracted the attention of the Indian philosophers, or of the discoveries which they had made in them, are very imperfect. To the researches of a few intelligent persons, who have visited India during the course of the three last centuries, we are indebted for more ample and authentic information. But from the reluctance with which the Brahmins communicate their sciences to strangers, and the inability of Europeans to acquire much knowledge of them, while, like the mysteries of their religion, they were concealed from vulgar eyes in an unknown tongue, this information was acquired slowly and with great difficulty. The same observation, however, which I made concerning our knowledge of the state of the fine arts among the people of India, is applicable to that of their progress in science, and the present age is the first furnished with sufficient evidence upon which to found a decisive judgment with respect to either.

Science, when viewed as disjoined from religion, the consideration of which I reserve for another head, is employed in contemplating either the operations of the understanding, the exercise of our moral powers, or the nature and qualities of external objects. The first is denominated logic; the second ethics; the third physics, or the knowledge of nature. With respect to the early progress in cultivating each of

theſe ſciences in India, we are in poſſeſſion of facts which merit attention.

But, prior to the conſideration of them, it is proper to examine the ideas of the Brahmins with reſpect to mind itſelf, for if theſe were not juſt, all their theories concerning its operations muſt have been erroneous and fanciful. The diſtinction between matter and ſpirit appears to have been early known by the philoſophers of India, and to the latter they aſcribed many powers of which they deemed the former to be incapable; and when we recollect how inadequate our conceptions are of every object that does not fall under the cognizance of the ſenſes, we may affirm (if allowance be made for a peculiar notion of the Hindoos which ſhall be afterwards explained) that no deſcription of the human ſoul is more ſuited to the dignity of its nature than that given by the author of the Mahabarat. "Some," ſays he, "regard the ſoul as a wonder, others "hear of it with aſtoniſhment, but no one know-"eth it. The weapon divideth it not; the fire "burneth it not; the water corrupteth it not; "the wind drieth it not away; for it is indivi-"ſible, inconſumable, incorruptible; it is eternal, "univerſal, permanent, immovable; it is invi-"ſible, inconceivable, and unalterable[f]." After this view of the ſentiments of the Brahmins concerning mind itſelf, we may proceed to conſider their ideas with reſpect to each of the

[f] Baghvat-Geeta, p. 37.

ſciences,

ſciences, in that tripartite arrangement which I mentioned.

1ſt, Logic and Metaphyſics. On no ſubject has the human underſtanding been more exerciſed than in analyſing its own operations. The various powers of the mind have been examined and defined. The origin and progreſs of our ideas have been traced; and proper rules have been preſcribed, of proceeding from the obſervation of facts to the eſtabliſhment of principles, or from the knowledge of principles to form arrangements of ſcience. The philoſophers of ancient Greece were highly celebrated for their proficiency in theſe abſtruſe ſpeculations; and in their diſcuſſions and arrangements, diſcovered ſuch depth of thought and acuteneſs of diſcernment, that their ſyſtems of Logic, particularly that of the Peripatetic School, have been deemed moſt diſtinguiſhed efforts of human reaſon.

But ſince we became acquainted, in ſome degree, with the literature and ſcience of the Hindoos, we find that as ſoon as men arrive at that ſtage in ſocial life, when they can turn their attention to ſpeculative inquiries, the human mind will, in every region of the earth, diſplay nearly the ſame powers, and proceed in its inveſtigations and diſcoveries by nearly ſimilar ſteps. From Abul Fazel's compendium of the philoſophy[5] of the Hindoos, the knowledge of which he acquired, as he informs us, by aſſociating in-

[5] Ayeen Akbery, vol. iii. p. 95, &c.

timately with the most learned men of the nation; from the specimen of their logical discussions contained in that portion of the Shastra published by Colonel Dow[h], and from many passages in the Baghvat-Geeta, it appears that the same speculations which occupied the philosophers of Greece had engaged the attention of the Indian Brahmins; and the theories of the former, either concerning the qualities of external objects, or the nature of our own ideas, were not more ingenious than those of the latter. To define with accuracy, to distinguish with acuteness, and to reason with subtlety, are characteristics of both; and in both, the same excess of refinement, in attempting to analyse those operations of mind which the faculties of man were not formed to comprehend, led sometimes to the most false and dangerous conclusions. That sceptical philosophy, which denies the existence of the material world, and asserts nothing to be real but our own ideas, seems to have been known in India as well as in Europe[i]; and the sages of the East, as they were indebted to philosophy for the knowledge of many important truths, were not more exempt than those of the West from its delusions and errors.

2d, Ethics. This science, which has for its object to ascertain what distinguishes virtue from vice, to investigate what motives should prompt men to act, and to prescribe rules for the conduct of life,

[h] Dissertation, p. xxxix, &c.

[i] Dow's Dissertation, p. lvii. Ayeen Akbery, vol. iii. p. 128.

as it is of all others the moſt intereſting, ſeems to have deeply engaged the attention of the Brahmins. Their ſentiments with reſpect to theſe points were various, and, like the philoſophers of Greece, the Brahmins were divided into ſects, diſtinguiſhed by maxims and tenets often diametrically oppoſite. That ſect with whoſe opinions we are, fortunately, beſt acquainted, had eſtabliſhed a ſyſtem of morals, founded on principles the moſt generous and dignified which unaſſiſted reaſon is capable of diſcovering. Man, they taught, was formed not for ſpeculation or indolence, but for action. He is born, not for himſelf alone, but for his fellow men. The happineſs of the ſociety of which he is a member, the good of mankind, are his ultimate and higheſt objects. In chuſing what to prefer or to reject, the juſtneſs and propriety of his own choice are the only conſiderations to which he ſhould attend. The events which may follow his actions are not in his own power, and whether they be proſperous or adverſe, as long as he is ſatisfied with the purity of the motives which induced him to act, he can enjoy that approbation of his own mind, which conſtitutes genuine happineſs, independent of the power of fortune or the opinions of other men. "Man (ſays the author of the Ma-
"habarat) enjoyeth not freedom from action.
"Every man is involuntarily urged to act by
"thoſe principles which are inherent in his na-
"ture. He who reſtraineth his active faculties,
"and ſitteth down with his mind attentive to the
"objects of his ſenſes, may be called one of an

"aſtrayed ſoul. The man is praiſed, who having "ſubdued all his paſſions, performeth with his "active faculties all the functions of life uncon-"cerned about the event[k]. Let the motive be "in the deed, and not in the event. Be not one "whoſe motive for action is the hope of reward. "Let not thy life be ſpent in inaction. Depend "upon application, perform thy duty, abandon "all thought of the conſequence, and make the "event equal, whether it terminate in good or "in evil; for ſuch an equality is called *Yog* "[i. e. attention to what is ſpiritual]. Seek an "aſylum then in wiſdom alone; for the miſer-"able and unhappy are ſo on account of the "event of things. Men who are endued with "true wiſdom are unmindful of good or evil in "this world. Study then to obtain this applica-"tion of thy underſtanding, for ſuch application "in buſineſs is a precious art. Wiſe men who "have abandoned all thought of the fruit which "is produced from their actions, are freed from "the chains of birth, and go to the regions of "eternal happineſs[l]."

From theſe and other paſſages which I might have quoted, we learn that the diſtinguiſhing doctrines of the Stoical ſchool were taught in India many ages before the birth of Zeno, and inculcated with a perſuaſive earneſtneſs nearly reſembling that of Epictetus; and it is not without aſtoniſhment that we find the tenets of this manly active philoſophy, which ſeem to be formed

[k] Baghvat-Geeta, p. 44. [l] Baghvat-Geeta, p. 40.

only

only for men of the moſt vigorous ſpirit, preſcribed as the rule of conduct to a race of people more eminent (as is generally ſuppoſed) for the gentleneſs of their diſpoſition than for the elevation of their minds.

3d, Physics. In all the ſciences which contribute towards extending our knowledge of nature, in mathematics, mechanics, and aſtronomy, Arithmetic is of elementary uſe. In whatever country then we find that ſuch attention has been paid to the improvement of arithmetic as to render its operations moſt eaſy and correct, we may preſume that the ſciences depending upon it have attained a ſuperior degree of perfection. Such improvement of this ſcience we find in India. While, among the Greeks and Romans, the only method uſed for the notatión of numbers was by the letters of the alphabet, which neceſſarily rendered arithmetical calculation extremely tedious and operoſe, the Indians had, from time immemorial, employed for the ſame purpoſe the ten cyphers, or figures, now univerſally known, and by means of them performed every operation in arithmetic with the greateſt facility and expedition. By the happy invention of giving a different value to each figure according to its change of place, no more than ten figures are needed in calculations the moſt complex, and of any given extent; and arithmetic is the moſt perfect of all the ſciences. The Arabians, not long after their ſettlement in Spain, introduced this mode of notation into Europe, and were candid enough to acknowledge that

they had derived the knowledge of it from the Indians. Though the advantages of this mode of notation are obvious and great, yet ſo ſlowly do mankind adopt new inventions, that the uſe of it was for ſome time confined to ſcience; by degrees, however, men of buſineſs relinquiſhed the former cumberſome method of computation by letters, and the Indian arithmetic came into general uſe throughout Europe[m]. It is now ſo familiar and ſimple, that the ingenuity of the people, to whom we are indebted for the invention, is leſs obſerved and leſs celebrated than it merits.

The aſtronomy of the Indians is a proof ſtill more conſpicuous of their extraordinary progreſs in ſcience. The attention and ſucceſs with which they ſtudied the motions of the heavenly bodies were ſo little known to the Greeks and Romans, that it is hardly mentioned by them but in the moſt curſory manner[n]. But as ſoon as the Mahomedans eſtabliſhed an intercourſe with the natives of India, they obſerved and celebrated the ſuperiority of their aſtronomical knowledge. Of the Europeans who viſited India after the communication with it by the Cape of Good Hope was diſcovered, M. Bernier, an inquiſitive and philoſophical traveller, was one of the firſt who learned that the Indians had long applied to the ſtudy of aſtronomy, and had made conſiderable progreſs in that ſcience[o]. His infor-

[m] Montucla Hiſt. des Mathemat. tom. i. p. 360, &c.
[n] Strabo, lib. xv. p. 1047. A. Dion. Perieg. v. 1173.
[o] Voyages, tom. ii. p. 145, &c.

mation,

mation, however, ſeems to have been very general and imperfect. We are indebted for the firſt ſcientific proof of the great proficiency of the Indians in aſtronomical knowledge, to M. de la Loubere, who, on his return from his embaſſy to Siam, brought with him an extract from a Siameſe manuſcript, which contained tables and rules for calculating the places of the ſun and moon. The manner in which theſe tables were conſtructed rendered the principles on which they were founded extremely obſcure, and it required a commentator as converſant in aſtronomical calculation as the celebrated Caſſini, to explain the meaning of this curious fragment. The epoch of the Siameſe tables correſponds to the 21ſt of March, A. D. 638. Another ſet of tables was tranſmitted from Chriſnabouram, in the Carnatic, the epoch of which anſwers to the 10th of March, A. D. 1491. A third ſet of tables came from Narſapour, and the epoch of them goes no farther back than A. D. 1569. The fourth and moſt curious ſet of tables was publiſhed by M. le Gentil, to whom they were communicated by a learned Brahmin of Tirvalore, a ſmall town on the Coromandel coaſt, about twelve miles weſt of Negapatam. The epoch of theſe tables is of high antiquity, and coincides with the beginning of the celebrated æra of the Calyougham or Collee Jogue, which commenced, according to the Indian account, three thouſand one hundred and two years before the birth of Chriſt[p].

A. D. 1687.

[p] See NOTE LXVII.

THESE

THESE four ſets of tables have been examined and compared by M. Bailly, who with ſingular felicity of genius has conjoined an uncommon degree of eloquence with the patient reſearches of an aſtronomer, and the profound inveſtigations of a geometrician. His calculations have been verified, and his reaſonings have been illuſtrated and extended by Mr. Playfair, in a very maſterly Diſſertation, publiſhed in the Tranſactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh[q].

INSTEAD of attempting to follow them in reaſonings and calculations, which from their nature are often abſtruſe and intricate, I ſhall ſatisfy myſelf with giving ſuch a general view of them as is ſuited to a popular work. This, I hope, may convey a proper idea of what has been publiſhed concerning the aſtronomy of India, a ſubject too curious and important to be omitted in any account of the ſtate of ſcience in that country; and, without interpoſing any judgment of my own, I ſhall leave each of my readers to form his own opinion.

IT may be conſidered as the general reſult of all the enquiries, reaſonings, and calculations, with reſpect to Indian aſtronomy, which have hitherto been made public, "That the motion of "the heavenly bodies, and more particularly "their ſituation at the commencement of the "different epochs to which the four ſets of tables

[q] Vol. ii. p. 135.

"refer,

"refer, are aſcertained with great accuracy; and "that many of the elements of their calculations, "eſpecially for very remote ages, are verified by "an aſtoniſhing coincidence with the tables of "the modern aſtronomy of Europe, when im-"proved by the lateſt and moſt nice deductions "from the theory of gravitation." Theſe conclusions are rendered peculiarly intereſting, by the evidence which they afford of an advancement in ſcience unexampled in the hiſtory of rude nations. The Indian Brahmins, who annually circulate a kind of almanac, containing aſtronomical predictions of ſome of the more remarkable phenomena in the heavens, ſuch as the new and full moons, the eclipſes of the ſun and moon, are in poſſeſſion of certain methods of calculation, which, upon examination, are found to involve in them a very extenſive ſyſtem of aſtronomical knowledge. M. le Gentil, a French aſtronomer, had an opportunity, while in India, of obſerving two eclipſes of the moon which had been calculated by a Brahmin, and he found the error in either to be very inconſiderable.

The accuracy of theſe reſults is leſs ſurpriſing than the juſtneſs and ſcientific nature of the principles on which the tables, by which they calculate, are conſtructed. For the method of predicting eclipſes, which is followed by the Brahmins, is of a kind altogether different from any that has been found in the poſſeſſion of rude nations in the infancy of aſtronomy. In Chaldæa, and even in Greece, in the early ages, the method of calculating

lating eclipſes was founded on the obſervation of a certain period or cycle, after which the eclipſes of the ſun and moon return nearly in the ſame order; but there was no attempt to analyſe the different circumſtances on which the eclipſe depends, or to deduce its phenomena from a preciſe knowledge of the motions of the ſun and moon. This laſt was reſerved for a more advanced period, when geometry, as well as arithmetic, were called in to the aſſiſtance of aſtronomy, and if it was attempted at all, ſeems not to have been attempted with ſucceſs before the age of Hipparchus. It is a method of this ſuperior kind, founded on principles and on an analyſis of the motions of the ſun and moon, which guides the calculations of the Brahmins, and they never employ any of the groſſer eſtimations, which were the pride of the firſt aſtronomers in Egypt and Chaldæa.

The Brahmins of the preſent times are guided in their calculations by theſe principles, though they do not now underſtand them; they know only the uſe of the tables which are in their poſſeſſion, but are unacquainted with the method of their conſtruction. The Brahmin who viſited M. le Gentil at Pondicherry, and inſtructed him in the uſe of the Indian tables, had no knowledge of the principles of his art, and diſcovered no curioſity concerning the nature of M. le Gentil's obſervations, or about the inſtruments which he employed. He was equally ignorant with reſpect to the authors of

theſe

theſe tables: and whatever is to be learnt concerning the time or place of their conſtruction, muſt be deduced from the tables themſelves. One ſet of theſe tables (as was formerly obſerved) profeſs to be as old as the beginning of the Calyougham, or to go back to the year 3102 before the Chriſtian æra; but as nothing (it may be ſuppoſed) is eaſier than for an aſtronomer to give to his tables what date he pleaſes, and by calculating backwards, to eſtabliſh an epoch of any aſſigned antiquity, the pretenſions of the Indian aſtronomy to ſo remote an origin are not to be admitted without examination.

That examination has accordingly been inſtituted by M. Bailly, and the reſult of his inquiries is aſſerted to be, that the aſtronomy of India is founded on obſervations which cannot be of a much later date than the period above mentioned. For the Indian tables repreſent the ſtate of the heavens at that period with aſtoniſhing exactneſs; and there is between them and the calculations of our modern aſtronomy ſuch a conformity with reſpect to thoſe ages, as could reſult from nothing, but from the authors of the former having accurately copied from nature, and having delineated truly the face of the heavens, in the age wherein they lived. In order to give ſome idea of the high degree of accuracy in the Indian tables, I ſhall ſelect a few inſtances of it, out of many that might be produced. The place of the ſun for the aſtronomical epoch at the beginning of the Calyougham, as ſtated in the

tables of Tirvalore, is only forty-ſeven minutes greater than by the tables of M. de la Caille, when corrected by the calculations of M. de la Grange. The place of the moon, in the ſame tables, for the ſame epoch, is only thirty-ſeven minutes different from the tables of Mayer. The tables of Ptolemy, for that epoch, are erroneous no leſs than ten degrees with reſpect to the place of the ſun, and eleven degrees with reſpect to that of the moon. The acceleration of the moon's motion reckoning from the beginning of the Calyougham to the preſent time, agrees, in the Indian tables, with thoſe of Mayer to a ſingle minute. The inequality of the ſun's motion, and the obliquity of the ecliptic, which were both greater in former ages than they are now, as repreſented in the tables of Tirvalore, are almoſt of the preciſe quantity that the theory of gravitation aſſigns to them three thouſand years before the Chriſtian æra. It is accordingly for thoſe very remote ages (about 5000 years diſtant from the preſent) that their aſtronomy is moſt accurate, and the nearer we come down to our own times, the conformity of its reſults with ours diminiſhes. It ſeems reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that the time when its rules are moſt accurate, is the time when the obſervations were made on which theſe rules are founded.

In ſupport of this concluſion, M. Bailly maintains that none of all the aſtronomical ſyſtems of Greece or Perſia, or of Tartary, from ſome of which it might be ſuſpected that the Indian

tables were copied, can be made to agree with them, eſpecially when we calculate for very remote ages. The ſuperior perfection of the Indian tables becomes always more conſpicuous as we go farther back into antiquity. This ſhews, likewiſe, how difficult it is to conſtruct any aſtronomical tables which will agree with the ſtate of the heavens for a period ſo remote from the time when the tables were conſtructed, as four or five thouſand years. It is only from aſtronomy in its moſt advanced ſtate, ſuch as it has attained in modern Europe, that ſuch accuracy is to be expected.

When an eſtimate is endeavoured to be made of the geometrical ſkill neceſſary for the conſtruction of the Indian tables and rules, it is found to be very conſiderable; and, beſide the knowledge of elementary geometry, it muſt have required plain and ſpherical trigonometry, or ſomething equivalent to them, together with certain methods of approximating to the values of geometrical magnitudes, which ſeem to riſe very far above the elements of any of thoſe ſciences. Some of theſe laſt mark alſo very clearly (although this has not been obſerved by M. Bailly) that the places to which theſe tables are adapted, muſt be ſituated between the Tropics, becauſe they are altogether inapplicable at a greater diſtance from the Equator.

From this long induction, the concluſion which ſeems obviouſly to reſult is, that the Indian aſtronomy is founded upon obſervations which were made

made at a very early period; and when we consider the exact agreement of the places which they assign to the sun and moon, and other heavenly bodies, at that epoch, with those deduced from the tables of De la Caille and Mayer, it strongly confirms the truth of the position which I have been endeavouring to establish concerning the early and high state of civilization in India.

Before I quit this subject, there is one circumstance which merits particular attention. All the knowledge which we have hitherto acquired of the principles and conclusions of Indian astronomy is derived from the southern part of the Carnatic, and the tables are adapted to places situated between the meridian of Cape Comorin and that which passes through the eastern part of Ceylon[r]. The Brahmins in the Carnatic acknowledge that their science of astronomy was derived from the North, and that their method of calculation is denominated *Fakiam*, or New, to distinguish it from the *Siddantam*, or ancient method established at Benares, which they allow to be much more perfect; and we learn from Abul Fazel, that all the astronomers of Indostan rely entirely upon the precepts contained in a book called *Soorej Sudhant*, composed in a very remote period[s]. It is manifestly from this book that the method to which the Brahmins of the South gave the name of Siddentam is taken. Benares has been from time immemorial the Athens of

[r] Bailly, Dis. Prelim. p. xvii. [s] Ayeen Akbery, iii. p. 8.

India,

India, the residence of the most learned Brahmins, and the seat both of science and literature. There, it is highly probable, whatever remains of the ancient astronomical knowledge and discoveries of the Brahmins is still preserved [t]. In an enlightened age and nation, and during a reign distinguished by a succession of the most splendid and successful undertakings to extend the knowledge of nature, it is an object worthy of public attention, to take measures for obtaining possession of all that time has spared of the philosophy and inventions of the most early and most highly civilized people of the East. It is with peculiar advantages Great Britain may engage in this laudable undertaking. Benares is subject to its dominion; the confidence of the Brahmins has been so far gained as to render them communicative; some of our countrymen are acquainted with that sacred language in which the mysteries both of religion and of science are recorded; movement and activity has been given to a spirit of inquiry throughout all the British establishments in India; persons who visited that country with other views, though engaged in occupations of a very different kind, are now carrying on scientific and literary researches with ardour and success. Nothing seems now to be wanting but that those entrusted with the administration of the British

[t] M. Bernier, in the year 1668, saw a large hall in Benares filled with the works of the Indian philosophers, physicians, and poets. Voy. ii. p. 148.

empire in India, ſhould enable ſome perſon capable, by his talents and liberality of ſentiment, of inveſtigating and explaining the more abſtruſe parts of Indian philoſophy, to devote his whole time to that important object. Thus Great Britain may have the glory of exploring fully that extenſive field of unknown ſcience, which the Academicians of France had the merit of firſt opening to the people of Europe [u].

VI. The laſt evidence which I ſhall mention of the early and high civilization of the ancient Indians, is deduced from the conſideration of their religious tenets and practices. The inſtitutions of religion, publicly eſtabliſhed in all the extenſive countries ſtretching from the banks of the Indus to Cape Comorin, preſent to view an aſpect nearly ſimilar. They form a regular and complete ſyſtem of ſuperſtition, ſtrengthened and upheld by every thing which can excite the reverence and ſecure the attachment of the people. The temples conſecrated to their deities are magnificent, and adorned not only with rich offerings, but with the moſt exquiſite works in painting and ſculpture, which the artiſts, higheſt in eſtimation among them, were capable of executing. The rites and ceremonies of their worſhip are pompous and ſplendid, and the performance of them not only mingles in all the more momentous tranſactions of common life, but conſtitutes an eſſential part of them. The

[u] See NOTE LXVIII.

Brahmins,

Brahmins, who, as miniſters of religion, preſide in all its functions, are elevated above every other order of men, by an origin deemed not only more noble, but acknowledged to be ſacred. They have eſtabliſhed among themſelves a regular hierarchy and gradation of ranks, which, by ſecuring ſubordination in their own order, adds weight to their authority, and gives them a more abſolute dominion over the minds of the people. This dominion they ſupport by the command of the immenſe revenues with which the liberality of princes, and the zeal of pilgrims and devotees, have enriched their Pagodas[x].

It is far from my intention to enter into any minute detail with reſpect to this vaſt and complicated ſyſtem of ſuperſtition. An attempt to enumerate the multitude of deities which are the objects of adoration in India; to deſcribe the ſplendour of worſhip in their Pagodas, and the immenſe variety of their rites and ceremonies; to recount the various attributes and functions which the craft of prieſts, or the credulity of the people, have aſcribed to their divinities; eſpecially if I were to accompany all this with the review of the numerous and often fanciful ſpeculations and theories of learned men on this ſubject, would require a work of great magnitude. I ſhall, therefore, on this, as on ſome of the former heads, confine myſelf to the preciſe

[x] Roger Porte Ouverte, p. 39. 209, &c.

point which I have kept uniformly in view, and by confidering the ſtate of religion in India, I ſhall endeavour not only to throw additional light on the ſtate of civilization in that country, but I flatter myſelf that, at the ſame time, I ſhall be able to give what may be conſidered as a ſketch and outline of the hiſtory and progreſs of ſuperſtition and falſe religion in every region of the earth.

I. We may obſerve, that, in every country, the received mythology, or ſyſtem of ſuperſtitious belief, with all the rites and ceremonies which it preſcribes, is formed in the infancy of ſociety, in rude and barbarous times. True religion is as different from ſuperſtition in its origin, as in its nature. The former is the offſpring of reaſon cheriſhed by ſcience, and attains to its higheſt perfection in ages of light and improvement. Ignorance and fear give birth to the latter, and it is always in the darkeſt periods that it acquires the greateſt vigour. That numerous part of the human ſpecies whoſe lot is labour, whoſe principal and almoſt ſole occupation is to ſecure ſubſiſtence, has neither leiſure nor capacity for entering into that path of intricate and refined ſpeculation, which conducts to the knowledge of the principles of rational religion. When the intellectual powers are juſt beginning to unfold, and their firſt feeble exertions are directed towards a few objects of primary neceſſity and uſe; when the faculties of the mind are ſo limited as not to have formed general and abſtract

abſtract ideas; when language is ſo barren as to be deſtitute of names to diſtinguiſh any thing not perceivable by ſome of the ſenſes; it is preposterous to expect that men ſhould be capable of tracing the relation between effects and their cauſes; or to ſuppoſe that they ſhould riſe from the contemplation of the former to the diſcovery of the latter, and form juſt conceptions of one Supreme Being, as the Creator and Governor of the univerſe. The idea of creation is ſo familiar, wherever the mind is enlarged by ſcience, and illuminated by revelation, that we ſeldom reflect how profound and abſtruſe the idea is, or conſider what progreſs man muſt have made in obſervation and reſearch, before he could arrive at any diſtinct knowledge of this elementary principle in religion. But even in its rude ſtate, the human mind, formed for religion, opens to the reception of ideas, which are deſtined, when corrected, and refined, to be the great ſource of conſolation amidſt the calamities of life. Theſe apprehenſions, however, are originally indiſtinct and perplexed, and ſeem to be ſuggeſted rather by the dread of impending evils, than to flow from gratitude for bleſſings received. While nature holds on her courſe with uniform and undiſturbed regularity, men enjoy the benefits reſulting from it, without much inquiry concerning its cauſe. But every deviation from this regular courſe rouſes and aſtoniſhes them. When they behold events to which they are not accuſtomed, they ſearch for the cauſes of them with eager curioſity. Their

underſtanding is often unable to diſcover theſe, but imagination, a more forward and ardent faculty of the mind, decides without heſitation. It aſcribes the extraordinary occurrences in nature to the influence of inviſible beings, and ſuppoſes the thunder, the hurricane, and the earthquake, to be the immediate effect of their agency. Alarmed by theſe natural evils, and expoſed, at the ſame time, to many dangers and diſaſters, which are unavoidable in the early and uncivilized ſtate of ſociety, men have recourſe for protection to power ſuperior to what is human, and the firſt rites or practices which bear any reſemblance to acts of religion, have it for their object to avert evils which they ſuffer or dread[y].

II. As ſuperſtition and falſe religion take their riſe, in every country, from nearly the ſame ſentiments and apprehenſions, the inviſible beings, who are the firſt objects of veneration, have every where a near reſemblance. To conceive an idea of one ſuperintending mind, capable of arranging and directing all the various operations of nature, ſeems to be an attainment far beyond the powers of man in the more early ſtages of his progreſs. His theories, more ſuited to the limited ſphere of his own obſerva-

[y] In the ſecond volume of the Hiſtory of America, p. 183. of fifth edition, I gave nearly a ſimilar account of the origin of falſe religion. Inſtead of labouring to convey the ſame ideas in different language, I have inſerted here ſome paragraphs in the ſame words I then uſed.

tion,

tion, are not ſo refined. He ſuppoſes that there is a diſtinct cauſe of every remarkable effect, and aſcribes to a ſeparate power every event which attracts his attention, or excites his terror. He fancies that it is the province of one deity to point the lightning, and, with an awful ſound, to hurl the irreſiſtible thunderbolt at the head of the guilty; that another rides in the whirlwind, and, at his pleaſure, raiſes or ſtills the tempeſt; that a third rules over the ocean; that a fourth is the god of battles; that while malevolent powers ſcatter the ſeeds of animoſity and diſcord, and kindle in the breaſt thoſe angry paſſions which give riſe to war, and terminate in deſtruction, others of a nature more benign, by inſpiring the hearts of men with kindneſs and love, ſtrengthen the bond of ſocial union, augment the happineſs, and increaſe the number of the human race.

Without deſcending farther into detail, or attempting to enumerate that infinite multitude of deities to which the fancy or the fears of men have allotted the direction of the ſeveral departments in nature, we may recogniſe a ſtriking uniformity of features in the ſyſtems of ſuperſtition eſtabliſhed throughout every part of the earth. The leſs men have advanced beyond the ſtate of ſavage life, and the more ſlender their acquaintance with the operations of nature, the fewer were their deities in number, and the more compendious was their theological creed; but as their mind gradually opened, and their know-

ledge continued to extend, the objects of their veneration multiplied, and the articles of their faith became more numerous. This took place remarkably among the Greeks in Europe, and the Indians in Asia, the two people in those great divisions of the earth, who were most early civilized, and to whom, for that reason, I shall confine all my observations. They believed, that over every movement in the natural world, and over every function in civil or domestic life, even the most common and trivial, a particular deity presided. The manner in which they arranged the stations of these superintending powers, and the offices which they allotted to each, were in many respects the same. What is supposed to be performed by the power of Jupiter, of Neptune, of Æolus, of Mars, of Venus, according to the mythology of the West, is ascribed in the East to the agency of Agnée, the god of fire; Varoon, the god of oceans; Vayoo, the god of wind[z]; Cama, the god of love; and a variety of other divinities.

The ignorance and credulity of men having thus peopled the heavens with imaginary beings, they ascribed to them such qualities and actions as they deemed suitable to their character and functions. It is one of the benefits derived from true religion, that by setting before men a standard of perfect excellence, which they should have

[z] Baghvat-Geeta, p. 94.

always

always in their eye, and endeavour to resemble, it may be said to bring down virtue from heaven to earth, and to form the human mind after a divine model. In fabricating systems of false religion, the procedure is directly the reverse. Men ascribe to the beings whom they have deified, such actions as they themselves admire and celebrate. The qualities of the gods who are the objects of adoration, are copied from those of the worshippers who bow down before them; and thus many of the imperfections peculiar to men, have found admittance into heaven. By knowing the adventures and attributes of any false deity, we can pronounce, with some degree of certainty, what must have been the state of society and manners when he was elevated to that dignity. The mythology of Greece plainly indicates the character of the age in which it was formed. It must have been in times of the greatest licentiousness, anarchy, and violence, that divinities of the highest rank could be supposed capable of perpetrating actions, or of being influenced by passions, which, in more enlightened periods, would be deemed a disgrace to human nature; it must have been when the earth was still infested with destructive monsters, and mankind, under forms of government too feeble to afford them protection, were exposed to the depredations of lawless robbers, or the cruelty of savage oppressors, that the well-known labours of Hercules, by which he was raised from earth to heaven, could have been necessary, or would have

have been deemed ſo highly meritorious. The ſame obſervation is applicable to the ancient mythology of India. Many of the adventures and exploits of the Indian deities are ſuited to the rudeſt ages of turbulence and rapine. It was to check diſorder, to redreſs wrongs, and to clear the earth of powerful oppreſſors, that Viſhnou, a divinity of the higheſt order, is ſaid to have become ſucceſſively incarnate, and to have appeared on earth in various forms[z].

III. The character and functions of thoſe deities which ſuperſtition created to itſelf as objects of its veneration, having everywhere a near reſemblance, the rites of their worſhip were everywhere extremely ſimilar. Accordingly, as deities were diſtinguiſhed, either by ferocity of character or licentiouſneſs of conduct, it is obvious what ſervices muſt have been deemed moſt acceptable to them. In order to conciliate the favour, or to appeaſe the wrath of the former, faſts, mortifications, and penances, all rigid, and many of them excruciating to an extreme degree, were the means employed. Their altars were always bathed in blood, the moſt coſtly victims were offered, whole hecatombs were ſlaughtered, even human ſacrifices were not unknown, and were held to be the moſt powerful expiations. In order to gain the good will of the deities of the latter deſcription, recourſe was had to inſtitutions of a very different kind, to

[z] Voyage de Sonnerat, tom. i. p. 158, &c.

ſplendid

ſplendid ceremonies, gay feſtivals, heightened by all the pleaſures of poetry, muſic, and dancing, but often terminating in ſcenes of indulgence too indecent to be deſcribed. Of both theſe, inſtances occur in the rites of Greek and Roman worſhip, which I need not mention to my learned readers[b]. In the Eaſt the ceremonial of ſuperſtition is nearly the ſame. The manners of the Indians, though diſtinguiſhed from the time when they became known to the people of the Weſt, for mildneſs, ſeem, in a more remote period, to have been in a greater degree ſimilar to thoſe of other nations. Several of their deities were fierce and awful in their nature, and were repreſented in their temples under the moſt terrific forms. If we did not know the dominion of ſuperſtition over the human mind, we ſhould hardly believe, that a ritual of worſhip ſuited to the character of ſuch deities could have been eſtabliſhed among a gentle people. Every act of religion, performed in honour of ſome of their gods, ſeems to have been preſcribed by fear. Mortifications and penances ſo rigorous, ſo painful, and ſo long continued, that we read the accounts of them with aſtoniſhment and horror, were multiplied. Repugnant as it is to the feelings of an Hindoo to ſhed the blood of any creature that has life, many different animals, even the moſt uſeful, the horſe and the cow, were offered up as victims upon the al-

[b] Strabo, lib. viii. p. 581. A. Lib. xii. p. 837. C.

tars

tars of ſome of their gods[c]; and what is ſtill more ſtrange, the Pagodas of the Eaſt were polluted with human ſacrifices as well as the temples of the Weſt[d]. But religious inſtitutions, and ceremonies of a leſs ſevere kind, were more adapted to the genius of a people, formed, by the extreme ſenſibility both of their mental and corporeal frame, to an immoderate love of pleaſure. In no part of the earth was a connection between the gratification of ſenſual deſire and the rites of public religion, diſplayed with more avowed indecency than in India. In every Pagoda there was a band of women ſet apart for the ſervice of the idol honoured there, and devoted from their early years to a life of pleaſure; for which the Brahmins prepared them by an education which added ſo many elegant accompliſhments to their natural charms, that what they gained by their profligacy, often brought no inconſiderable acceſſion to the revenue of the temple. In every function performed in the Pagodas, as well as in every public proceſſion, it is the office of theſe women to dance before the idol, and to ſing hymns in his praiſe; and it is difficult to ſay, whether they treſpaſs moſt againſt decency by the geſtures they exhibit, or by the verſes which they recite. The walls of the Pagoda are

[c] Ayeen Akbery, vol. iii. p. 241. Roger Porte Ouverte, p. 251.

[d] Heeto-pades, p. 185—322. Aſiat. Reſearches, vol. i. p. 265. Voyage de Sonnerat, vol. i. p. 207. Roger, p. 251.

covered with paintings, in a ſtile no leſs indelicate[e]; and in the innermoſt receſs of the temple, for it would be profane to call it the ſanctuary, is placed the *Lingam*, an emblem of productive power too groſs to be explained[f].

IV. How abſurd ſoever the articles of faith may be which ſuperſtition has adopted, or how unhallowed the rites which it preſcribes, the former are received in every age and country with unheſitating aſſent, by the great body of the people, and the latter obſerved with ſcrupulous exactneſs. In our reaſonings concerning religious opinions and practices which differ widely from our own; we are extremely apt to err. Having been inſtructed ourſelves in the principles of a religion, worthy in every reſpect of that divine wiſdom by which they were dictated, we frequently expreſs wonder at the credulity of nations in embracing ſyſtems of belief which appear to us ſo directly repugnant to right reaſon, and ſometimes ſuſpect that tenets ſo wild and extravagant do not really gain credit with them. But experience may ſatisfy us, that neither our wonder nor ſuſpicions are well founded. No article of the public religion was called in queſtion by thoſe people of ancient Europe, with

[e] Voyage de Gentil. vol. i. p. 244. 260. Preface to Code of Gentoo Laws, p. lvii.

[f] Roger Porte Ouverte, p. 157. Voyage de Sonnerat, vol. i. p. 41. 175. Sketches, vol. i. p. 203. Hamilton's Trav. vol. i. p. 379.

whoſe

whoſe hiſtory we are beſt acquainted, and no practice which it enjoined appeared improper to them. On the other hand, every opinion that tended to diminiſh the reverence of men for the gods of their country, or to alienate them from their worſhip, excited among the Greeks and Romans that indignant zeal which is natural to every people attached to their religion, by a firm perſuaſion of its truth. The attachment of the Indians, both in ancient and modern times, to the tenets and rites of their anceſtors, has been, if poſſible, ſtill greater. In no country of which we have any account, were precautions taken with ſo much ſolicitude to place the great body of the people beyond the reach of any temptation to doubt or diſbelief. They not only were prevented, (as I have already obſerved the great bulk of mankind muſt always be in every country,) from entering upon any ſpeculative inquiry, by the various occupations of active and laborious life, but any attempt to extend the ſphere of their knowledge was expreſsly prohibited. If one of the Sooder caſt, by far the moſt numerous of the four into which the whole nation was divided, preſumed to read any portion of the ſacred books, in which all the ſcience known in India is contained, he was ſeverely puniſhed; if he ventured to get it by heart, he was put to death[5]. To aſpire after any higher degree of knowledge than the Brahmins have been pleaſed to teach, would be deemed not

[5] Code of Gentoo Laws, ch. xxi. § 7.

only preſumption but impiety. Even the higher caſts depended entirely for inſtruction on the Brahmins, and could acquire no portion of ſcience but what they deigned to communicate. By means of this, a devout reverence was univerſally maintained for thoſe inſtitutions which were conſidered as ſacred; and though the faith of the Hindoos has been often tried by ſevere perſecutions, excited by the bigotry of their Mahomedan conquerors, no people ever adhered with greater fidelity to the tenets and rites of their anceſtors [h].

V. We may obſerve, that when ſcience and philoſophy are diffuſed through any country, the ſyſtem of ſuperſtition is ſubjected to a ſcrutiny from which it was formerly exempt, and opinions ſpread which imperceptibly diminiſh its influence over the minds of men. A free and full examination is always favourable to truth, but fatal to error. What is received with implicit faith in ages of darkneſs, will excite contempt or indignation in an enlightened period. The hiſtory of religion in Greece and Italy, the only countries of Europe which, in ancient times, were diſtinguiſhed for their attainments in ſcience, confirms the truth of this obſervation. As ſoon as ſcience made ſuch progreſs in Greece as rendered men capable of diſcerning the wiſdom, the foreſight, and the goodneſs diſplayed in creating, preſerving, and governing the world, they muſt have perceived, that the characters of the divinities

[h] Orme's Fragment, p. 102. Sonnerat, vol. i. p. 194.

which

which were propoſed as the objects of adoration in their temples, could not entitle them to be conſidered as the preſiding powers in nature. A poet might addreſs Jupiter as the father of gods and men, who governed both by eternal laws; but to a philoſopher, the ſon of Saturn, the ſtory of whoſe life is a ſeries of violent and licentious deeds, which would render any man odious or deſpicable, muſt have appeared altogether unworthy of that ſtation. The nature of the religious ſervice celebrated in their temples muſt have been no leſs offenſive to an enlightened mind, than the character of the deities in honour of whom it was performed. Inſtead of inſtitutions, tending to reclaim men from vice, to form or to ſtrengthen habits of virtue, or to elevate the mind to a ſenſe of its proper dignity, ſuperſtition either occupied its votaries in frivolous unmeaning ceremonies, or preſcribed rites, which operated, with fatal influence, in inflaming the paſſions and corrupting the heart.

It is with timidity, however, and caution, that men venture to attack the eſtabliſhed religion of their country, or to impugn opinions which have been long held ſacred. At firſt, ſome philoſophers endeavoured, by allegorical interpretations and refined comments, to explain the popular mythology, as if it had been a deſcription of the powers of nature, and of the various events and revolutions which take place in the ſyſtem of the material world, and endeavoured by this expedient, to palliate many of its abſurdities. By degrees,

degrees, bolder theories concerning religion were admitted into the ſchools of ſcience. Philoſophers of enlarged views, ſenſible of the impiety of the popular ſuperſtition, formed ideas concerning the perfections of one Supreme Being, the Creator and Ruler of the univerſe, as juſt and rational as have ever been attained by the unaſſiſted powers of the human mind.

If from Europe we now turn to Aſia, we ſhall find, that the obſervation which I have made upon the hiſtory of falſe religion holds equally true there. In India as well as in Greece, it was by cultivating ſcience that men were firſt led to examine and to entertain doubts with reſpect to the eſtabliſhed ſyſtems of ſuperſtition; and when we conſider the great difference between the eccleſiaſtical conſtitution (if I may uſe that expreſſion) of the two countries, we are apt to imagine that the eſtabliſhed ſyſtem lay more open to examination in the latter than in the former. In Greece there was not any diſtinct race or order of men ſet apart for performing the functions of religion, or to ſerve as hereditary and intereſted guardians of its tenets and inſtitutions. But in India the Brahmins were born the miniſters of religion, and they had an excluſive right of preſiding in all the numerous rites of worſhip which ſuperſtition preſcribed as neceſſary to avert the wrath of Heaven, or to render it propitious. Theſe diſtinctions and privileges ſecured to them a wonderful aſcendant over their countrymen; and every conſideration

that can influence the human mind, the honour, the intereſt, the power of their order, called upon them to ſupport the tenets, and to maintain the inſtitutions and rites, with which the preſervation of this aſcendant was ſo intimately connected.

But as the moſt eminent perſons of the Caſt devoted their lives to the cultivation of ſcience, the progreſs which they made in all the branches of it (of which I have given ſome account) was great, and enabled them to form ſuch a juſt idea of the ſyſtem of nature, and of the power, wiſdom, and goodneſs diſplayed in the formation and government of it, as elevated their minds above the popular ſuperſtition, and led them to acknowledge and reverence one Supreme Being, "the Creator of all things (to uſe their own expreſſions), and from whom all things proceed[h]."

This is the idea which Abul Fazel, who examined the opinions of the Brahmins with the greateſt attention and candour, gives of their theology. "They all," ſays he, "believe in the "unity of the Godhead, and although they hold "images in high veneration, it is only becauſe "they repreſent celeſtial beings, and prevent the "thoughts of thoſe who worſhip them from wandering[i]." The ſentiments of the moſt intelligent Europeans who have viſited India, coincide perfectly with his, in reſpect to this point. The accounts which Mr. Bernier received from the

[h] Baghvat-Geeta, p. 84. [i] Ayeen Akbery, vol. iii. p. 3.

Pundits

Pundits of Benares, both of their external worſhip, and of one Sovereign Lord being the ſole object of their devotion, is preciſely the ſame with that given by Abul Fazel[k]. Mr. Wilkins, better qualified perhaps than any European ever was to judge with reſpect to this ſubject, repreſents the learned Brahmins of the preſent times as Theiſts, believers in the unity of God[l]. Of the ſame opinion is M. Sonnerat, who reſided in India ſeven years, in order to inquire into the manners, ſciences, and religion of the Hindoos[m]. The Pundits who tranſlated the Code of Gentoo Laws, declare, "that it was the Supreme Being, who, by his power, formed all creatures of the animal, vegetable, and material world, from the four elements of fire, water, air, and earth, to be an ornament to the magazine of creation; and whoſe comprehenſive benevolence ſelected man, the centre of knowledge, to have dominion and authority over the reſt; and, having beſtowed upon this favourite object judgment and underſtanding, gave him ſupremacy over the corners of the world[n]."

Nor are theſe to be regarded as refined ſentiments of later times. The Brahmins being conſidered by the Mahomedan conquerors of India as the guardians of the national religion, have

[k] Voyage, tom. ii. p. 159.
[l] Preface to Baghvat-Geeta, p. 24.
[m] Voyage, tom. i. p. 198. [n] Prelim. Diſcourſ. p. lxxiii.

been ſo ſtudiouſly depreſſed by their fanatical zeal, that the modern members of that order are as far inferior to their anceſtors in ſcience as in power. It is from the writings of their ancient Pundits that they derive the moſt liberal ſentiments which they entertain at preſent, and the wiſdom for which they are now celebrated has been tranſmitted to them from ages very remote.

THAT this aſſertion is well founded we are enabled to pronounce with certainty, as the moſt profound myſteries of Hindoo theology, concealed with the greateſt care from the body of the people, have been unveiled by the tranſlations from the Sanſkreet language lately publiſhed. The principal deſign of the Baghvat-Geeta, an epiſode in the Mahabarat, a poem of the higheſt antiquity, and of the greateſt authority in India, ſeems to have been to eſtabliſh the doctrine of the unity of the Godhead, and from a juſt view of the divine nature to deduce an idea of what worſhip will be moſt acceptable to a perfect Being. In it, amidſt much obſcure metaphyſical diſcuſſion, ſome ornaments of fancy unſuited to our taſte, and ſome thoughts elevated to a tract of ſublimity into which, from our habits of reaſoning and judging, we will find it difficult to follow them[o], we find deſcriptions of the Supreme Being entitled to equal praiſe with thoſe of the Greek philoſophers which I have celebrated. Of

[o] Mr. Haſtings's Letter, prefixed to the Baghvat-Geeta, p. 7.

these I shall now produce one to which I formerly alluded, and refer my readers for others to the work itself: "O mighty Being," says Arjoon, "who art the prime Creator, eternal "God of Gods, the World's Mansion! Thou art "the incorruptible Being, distinct from all things "transient. Thou art before all Gods, the an-"cient *Pooroosh* [i. e. vital soul], and the Su-"preme Supporter of the universe. Thou knowest "all things, and art worthy to be known; thou "art the Supreme Mansion, and by thee, O in-"finite Form, the universe was spread abroad! "reverence be unto thee before and behind; "reverence be unto thee on all sides; O thou "who art all in all! Infinite is thy power and "thy glory.—Thou art the father of all things, "animate and inanimate. Thou art the wise in-"structor of the whole, worthy to be adored. "There is none like unto thee; where, then, in "the three worlds, is there one above thee? "Wherefore I bow down; and, with my body "prostrate upon the ground, crave thy mercy, "Lord! worthy to be adored; for thou shouldst "bear with me, even as a father with his son, a "friend with his friend, a lover with his be-"loved[q]." A description of the Supreme Being is given in one of the sacred books of the Hindoos, from which it is evident what were the general sentiments of the learned Brahmins concerning the divine nature and perfections: "As "God is immaterial, he is above all conception;

[q] Baghvat-Geeta, p. 94, 95.

"as he is invisible, he can have no form; but "from what we behold of his works, we may "conclude, that he is eternal, omnipotent, know-"ing all things, and present every where[q]."

To men capable of forming such ideas of the Deity, the public service in the Pagodas must have appeared to be an idolatrous worship of images, by a superstitious multiplication of frivolous or immoral rites; and they must have seen that it was only by sanctity of heart, and purity of manners, men could hope to gain the approbation of a Being perfect in goodness. This truth Veias labours to inculcate in the Mahabarat, but with the prudent reserve and artful precautions natural to a Brahmin, studious neither to offend his countrymen, nor to diminish the influence of his own order. His ideas concerning the mode of worshipping the deity, are explained in many striking passages of the poem; but unwilling to multiply quotations, I satisfy myself with referring to them[r].

When we recollect how slowly the mind of man opens to abstract ideas, and how difficult (according to an observation in the Mahabarat) an invisible path is to corporeal beings, it is evident that the Hindoos must have attained an high degree of improvement before their sentiments rose so far superior to the popular superstition of their country. The different states of Greece had subsisted long, and had made considerable progress in re-

[q] Dowe's Differt. p. xl.

[r] Baghvat-Geeta, p. 55. 67. 75. 97. 119.

finement,

finement, before the errors of falſe religion began to be detected. It was not until the age of Socrates, and in the ſchools of philoſophy eſtabliſhed by his diſciples, that principles adverſe to the tenets of the popular ſuperſtition were much propagated.

A LONGER period of time elapſed before the Romans, a nation of warriors and ſtateſmen, were enlightened by ſcience, or ventured upon any free diſquiſition concerning the objects or the rights of worſhip, authorized by their anceſtors. But in India the happy effects of progreſs in ſcience were much more early conſpicuous. Without adopting the wild computations of Indian chronology, according to which, the Mahabarat was compoſed above four thouſand years ago, we muſt allow, that it is a work of very great antiquity, and the author of it diſcovers an acquaintance with the principles of theology, of morals, and of metaphyſics, more juſt and rational, than ſeems to have been attained, at that period, by any nation whoſe hiſtory is known.

BUT ſo unable are the limited powers of the human mind to form an adequate idea of the perfections and operations of the Supreme Being, that in all the theories concerning them, of the moſt eminent philoſophers in the moſt enlightened nations, we find a lamentable mixture of ignorance and error. From theſe the Brahmins were not more exempt than the ſages of other countries. As they held that the ſyſtem of nature was not only originally arranged by the power

and wiſdom of God, but that every event which happened was brought about by his immediate interpoſition, and as they could not comprehend how a being could act in any place unleſs where it was preſent, they ſuppoſed the Deity to be a vivifying principle diffuſed through the whole creation, an univerſal ſoul that animated each part of it[s]. Every intelligent nature, particularly the ſouls of men, they conceived to be portions ſeparated from this great ſpirit[t], to which, after fulfilling their deſtiny on earth, and attaining a proper degree of purity, they would be again re-united. In order to efface the ſtains with which a ſoul, during its reſidence on earth, has been defiled, by the indulgence of ſenſual and corrupt appetites, they taught that it muſt paſs, in a long ſucceſſion of tranſmigrations, through the bodies of different animals, until, by what it ſuffers and what it learns in the various forms of its exiſtence, it ſhall be ſo thoroughly refined from all pollution as to be rendered meet for being abſorbed into the divine eſſence, and returns like a drop into that unbounded ocean from which it originally iſſued[u]. Theſe doctrines of the Brahmins, concerning the deity, as the ſoul which pervades all nature, giving activity and vigour to every part of it, as well as the final re-union of all intelligent creatures to their primæval ſource, coincide

[s] Baghvat-Geeta, p. 65. 78. 85. Bernier, tom. ii. p. 163.

[t] Dow's Differt. p. xliii.

[u] Voy. de Sonnerat, vol. i. p. 192. 200. Baghvat-Geeta, p. 39. 115. Dow's Differt. p. xliii.

perfectly

perfectly with the tenets of the Stoical School. It is remarkable, that after having obſerved a near reſemblance in the moſt ſublime ſentiments of their moral doctrine, we ſhould likewiſe diſcover ſuch a ſimilarity in the errors of their theological ſpeculations[x].

The human mind, however, when deſtitute of ſuperior guidance, is apt to fall into a practical error with reſpect to religion, of a tendency ſtill more dangerous. When philoſophers, by their attainments in ſcience, began to acquire ſuch juſt ideas of the nature and perfections of the Supreme Being, as convinced them that the popular ſyſtem of ſuperſtition was not only abſurd but impious, they were fully aware of all the danger which might ariſe from communicating what they had diſcovered to the people, incapable of comprehending the force of thoſe reaſons which had ſwayed with them, and ſo zealouſly attached to eſtabliſhed opinions, as to revolt againſt any attempt to detect their falſehood. Inſtead, therefore, of allowing any ray of that knowledge which illuminated their own minds to reach them, they formed a theory to juſtify their own conduct, and to prevent the darkneſs of that cloud which hung over the minds of their fellow-men from being ever diſpelled. The vulgar and unlearned, they contended, had no right to truth. Doomed by their condition to remain in ignorance, they were to be kept in

[x] Lipſij Phyſiol. Stoicor. lib. i. differt. viii. xxi. Seneca, Antoninus, Epictetus, paſſim.

order

order by deluſion, and allured to do what is right, or deterred from venturing upon what is wrong, by the hope of thoſe imaginary rewards which ſuperſtition promiſes, and the dread of thoſe puniſhments which it threatens. In confirmation of this, I might quote the doctrine of moſt of the philoſophic ſects, and produce the words of almoſt every eminent Greek and Roman writer. It will be ſufficient, however, to lay before my readers a remarkable paſſage in Strabo, to whom I have been ſo often indebted in the courſe of my reſearches, and who was no leſs qualified to judge with reſpect to the political opinions of his contemporaries, than to deſcribe the countries which they inhabited. "What is marvellous in fable, is employed," ſays he, "ſometimes to pleaſe, and ſometimes "to inſpire terror, and both theſe are of uſe, "not only with children, but with perſons of "mature age. To children we propoſe delight-"ful fictions, in order to encourage them to act "well, and ſuch as are terrible, in order to re-"ſtrain them from evil. Thus when men are "united in ſociety, they are incited to what is "laudable, by hearing the poets celebrate the "ſplendid actions of fabulous ſtory, ſuch as the "labours of Hercules and Theſeus, in reward "for which they are now honoured as divinities, "or by beholding their illuſtrious deeds exhi-"bited to public view in painting and ſculpture. "On the other hand, they are deterred from "vice, when the puniſhments inflicted by the "gods upon evil doers are related, and threats

"are

"are denounced against them in awful words, or "represented by frightful figures, and when men "believe that these threats have been really exe-"cuted upon the guilty. For it is impossible to "conduct women and the gross multitude, and "to render them holy, pious, and upright, by "the precepts of reason and philosophy; super-"stition, or the fear of the gods, must be called "in aid, the influence of which is founded on "fictions and prodigies. For the thunder of "Jupiter, the ægis of Minerva, the trident of "Neptune, the torches and snakes of the furies, "the spears of the gods, adorned with ivy, and "the whole ancient theology, are all fables, "which the legislators who formed the political "constitution of states employ as bugbears to "overawe the credulous and simple[y].

These ideas of the philosophers of Europe were precisely the same which the Brahmins had adopted in India, and according to which they regulated their conduct with respect to the great body of the people. As their order had an exclusive right to read the sacred books, to cultivate and to teach science, they could more effectually prevent all who were not members of it from acquiring any portion of information beyond what they were pleased to impart. When the free circulation of knowledge is not circumscribed by such restrictions, the whole community derives benefit from every new acquisition in science, the influence of which, both upon sen-

[y] Strabo, lib. i. p. 36. B.

timent

timent and conduct, extends insensibly from the few to the many, from the learned to the ignorant. But wherever the dominion of false religion is completely established, the body of the people gain nothing by the greatest improvements in knowledge. Their philosophers conceal from them, with the utmost solicitude, the truths which they have discovered, and labour to support that fabric of superstition which it was their duty to have overturned. They not only enjoin others to respect the religious rites prescribed by the laws of their country, but conform to them in their own practice, and with every external appearance of reverence and devotion, bow down before the altars of deities, who must inwardly be the objects of their contempt. Instead of resembling the teachers of true religion in the benevolent ardour with which they have always communicated to their fellow-men the knowledge of those important truths, with which their own minds were enlightened and rendered happy, the sages of Greece, and the Brahmins of India, carried on, with studied artifice, a scheme of deceit, and, according to an emphatic expression of an inspired writer, they *detained* the truth in unrighteousness[z]. They knew and approved what was true, but among the rest of mankind they laboured to support and to perpetuate what is false.

Thus I have gone through all the particulars which I originally proposed to examine, and have

[z] Rom. i. 18.

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endeavoured to diſcover the ſtate of the inhabitants of India with reſpect to each of them. If I had aimed at nothing elſe than to deſcribe the civil policy, the arts, the ſciences, the religious inſtitutions of one of the moſt ancient and moſt numerous race of men, that alone would have led me into inquiries and diſcuſſions both curious and inſtructive. I own, however, that I have all along kept in view an object more intereſting, as well as of greater importance, and entertain hopes, that if the account which I have given of the early and high civilization of India, and of the wonderful progreſs of its inhabitants in elegant arts and uſeful ſcience, ſhall be received as juſt and well eſtabliſhed, it may have ſome influence upon the behaviour of Europeans towards that people. Unfortunately for the human ſpecies, in whatever quarter of the globe the people of Europe have acquired dominion, they have found the inhabitants not only in a ſtate of ſociety and improvement far inferior to their own, but different in their complexion, and in all their habits of life. Men in every ſtage of their career are ſo ſatisfied with the progreſs made by the community of which they are members, that it becomes to them a ſtandard of perfection, and they are apt to regard people whoſe condition is not ſimilar, with contempt, and even averſion. In Africa and America, the diſſimilitude is ſo conſpicuous, that, in the pride of their ſuperiority, Europeans thought themſelves entitled to reduce the natives of the former to ſlavery, and to exterminate thoſe of the latter.

Even

Even in India, though far advanced beyond the two other quarters of the globe in improvement, the colour of the inhabitants, their effeminate appearance, their unwarlike ſpirit, the wild extravagance of their religious tenets and ceremonies, and many other circumſtances, confirmed Europeans in ſuch an opinion of their own pre-eminence, that they have always viewed and treated them as an inferior race of men. Happy would it be if any of the four European nations, who have ſucceſſively acquired extenſive territories and power in India, could altogether vindicate itſelf from having acted in this manner. Nothing, however, can have a more direct and powerful tendency to inſpire Europeans, proud of their own ſuperior attainments in policy, ſcience, and arts, with proper ſentiments concerning the people of India, and to teach them a due regard for their natural rights as men, than their being accuſtomed, not only to conſider the Hindoos of the preſent times as a knowing and ingenious race of men, but to view them as deſcended from anceſtors who had attained to a very high degree of improvement, many ages before the leaſt ſtep towards civilization had been taken in any part of Europe. It was by an impartial and candid inquiry into their manners, that the Emperor Akber was led to conſider the Hindoos as no leſs entitled to protection and favour than his other ſubjects, and to govern them with ſuch equity and mildneſs, as to merit from a grateful people the honourable appellation of "The Guardian of Mankind." It was from a

thorough knowledge of their character and acquirements, that his Vizier Abul Fazel, with a liberality of mind unexampled among Mahomedans, pronounces an high encomium on the virtues of the Hindoos, both as individuals and as members of ſociety, and celebrates their attainments in arts and ſciences of every kind[a]. If I might preſume to hope that the deſcription which I have given of the manners and inſtitutions of the people of India could contribute in the ſmalleſt degree, and with the remote influence, to render their character more reſpectable, and their condition more happy, I ſhall cloſe my literary labours, with the ſatisfaction of thinking that I have not lived or written in vain.

[a] Ayeen Akbery, vol. iii. p. 2. 81. 95.

NOTES

AND

ILLUSTRATIONS.

NOTE I. Sect. I. p. 7.

CREDULITY and ſcepticiſm are two oppoſite extremes into which men are apt to run, in examining the events which are ſaid to have happened in the early ages of antiquity. Without incurring any ſuſpicion of a propenſity to the latter of theſe, I may be allowed to entertain doubts concerning the expedition of Seſoſtris into India, and his conqueſt of that country. —— 1. Few facts in ancient hiſtory ſeem to be better eſtabliſhed, than that of the early averſion of the Egyptians to a ſea-faring life. Even the power of deſpotiſm cannot at once change the ideas and manners of a nation, eſpecially when they have been confirmed by long habit, and rendered ſacred by the ſanction of religion. That Seſoſtris, in the courſe of a few years, ſhould have ſo entirely overcome the prejudices of a ſuperſtitious people, as to be able to fit out four hundred ſhips of force, in the Arabian Gulf, beſides another fleet which he had in the Mediterranean, appears to be extremely improbable. Armaments of ſuch magnitude would require the utmoſt efforts of a great and long eſtabliſhed

maritime power.——2. It is remarkable that Herodotus, who inquired with the most persevering diligence into the ancient history of Egypt, and who received all the information concerning it which the priests of Memphis, Heliopolis, and Thebes could communicate, Herodot. Edit. Wesselingij, lib. ii. c. 3., although he relates the history of Sesostris at some length, does not mention his conquest of India, lib. ii. c. 102, &c. That tale, it is probable, was invented in the period between the age of Herodotus and that of Diodorus Siculus, from whom we receive a particular detail of the Indian expedition of Sesostris. His account rests entirely upon the authority of the Egyptian priests; and Diodorus himself not only gives it as his general opinion, "that many things which they related, "flowed rather from a desire to promote the honour of their "country, than from attention to truth," lib. i. p. 34. edit. Wesselingij, Amst. 1746; but takes particular notice that the Egyptian priests, as well as the Greek writers, differ widely from one another in the accounts which they give of the actions of Sesostris, lib. i. p. 62.——3. Though Diodorus asserts that in relating the history of Sesostris he had studied to select what appeared to him most probable, and most agreeable to the monuments of that monarch still remaining in Egypt, he has admitted into his narrative many marvellous circumstances, which render the whole extremely suspicious. The father of Sesostris, as he relates, collected all the male children who were born in Egypt on the same day with his son, in order that they might be educated together with him conformable to a mode which he prescribed with a view of preparing them as proper instruments to carry into execution the great undertakings for which he destined Sesostris. Accordingly, when Sesostris set out upon his Indian expedition, which, from circumstances mentioned by Diodorus, must have been about the fortieth year of his age, one thousand seven

hundred of his youthful associates are said to have been still alive, and were entrusted with high command in his army. But if we apply to the examination of this story the certain principles of political arithmetic, it is evident, that if one thousand seven hundred of the male children born on the same day with Sesostris were alive when his great expedition commenced, the number of children born in Egypt on each day of the year must have been at least ten thousand, and the population of the kingdom must have exceeded sixty millions; Goguet l'Origine des Loix, des Arts, &c. tom. ii. p. 12. &c., a number far beyond the bounds of credibility, in a kingdom which, from the accurate calculations of M. D'Anville, Memoire sur l'Egypt Anc. et Moderne, p. 23, &c., does not contain more than two thousand one hundred square leagues of habitable country. Decline and Fall of the Rom. Emp. vol. v. p. 348. Another marvellous particular is the description of a ship of cedar, four hundred and ninety feet in length, covered on the outside with gold, and on the inside with silver, which Sesostris consecrated to the Deity who was the chief object of worship at Thebes. Lib. i. p. 67. Such too is the account he gives of the Egyptian army, in which, beside six hundred thousand infantry and twenty-four thousand cavalry, there were twenty-seven thousand armed chariots. Ibid. p. 64. ——4. These and other particulars appeared so far to exceed the bounds of probability, that the sound understanding of Strabo the geographer rejected, without hesitation, the accounts of the Indian expedition of Sesostris; and he not only asserts, in the most explicit terms, that this monarch never entered India, lib. xv. p. 1007. C. edit. Casaub. Amst. 1707; but he ranks what has been related concerning his operations in that country with the fabulous exploits of Bacchus and Hercules, p. 1007. D. 1009. B. The philosophical historian of Alexander the Great seems to have entertained the same sentiments with respect to the exploits of Se-

ſoſtris in India. Hiſt. Ind. c. 5. Arrian Eped. Alex. edit. Gronov. L. Bat. 1704.—What ſlender information concerning India, or it inhabitants, Herodotus had received, ſeems to have been derived, not from the Egyptians, but from the Perſians, lib. iii. c. 105; which renders it probable, that in his time there was little intercourſe between Egypt and India. If Reland be well founded in his opinion, that many of the words mentioned by ancient authors as Indian are really Perſian, we may conclude that there was an early intercourſe between Perſia and India, of which hardly any trace remains in hiſtory. Reland. Diſſert. de Veteri Lingua Indic. ap. Diſſert. Miſcel. vol. i. p. 209.

NOTE II. Sect. I. p. 8.

When we conſider the extent and effects of the Phenician commerce, the ſcanty information concerning it which we receive from ancient writers muſt, on a firſt view, appear ſurpriſing. But when we recollect that all the Greek hiſtorians, (Herodotus excepted,) who give any account of the Phenicians, publiſhed their works long after the deſtruction of Tyre by Alexander the Great, we will ceaſe to wonder at their not having entered into minute details with reſpect to a trade which was then removed to new ſeats, and carried on in other channels. But the power and opulence of Tyre, in the proſperous age of its commerce, muſt have attracted general attention. In the prophecies of Ezekiel, who flouriſhed two hundred and ſixty years before the fall of Tyre, there is the moſt particular account of the nature and variety of its commercial tranſactions that is to be found in any ancient writer, and which conveys at the ſame time a magnificent idea of the extenſive power of that ſtate. Ch. xxvi. xxvii. xxviii.

NOTE

NOTE III. Sect. I. p. 12.

The account given of the revenue of the Perſian monarchy by Herodotus is curious, and ſeems to have been copied from ſome public record, which had been communicated to him. According to it the Perſian empire was divided into twenty ſatrapys, or governments. The tribute levied from each is ſpecified, amounting in all to 14,560 Eubœan talents, which Dr. Arbuthnot reckons to be equal to 2,807,437*l.* ſterling money; a ſum extremely ſmall for the revenue of the Great King, and which ill accords with many facts, concerning the riches, magnificence, and luxury of the Eaſt, that occur in antient authors.

NOTE IV. Sect. I. p. 15.

Major Rennell, in the ſecond edition of his Memoir, has traced, from very imperfect materials, the routes by which Alexander, Tamerlane, and Nadir Shah penetrated into India, with a degree of accuracy which does honour to his diſcernment, and diſplays the ſuperiority of his knowledge, in the antient and modern geography of that country. His reſearches he has illuſtrated by an additional map. To theſe, I muſt refer my readers. Nor are they to conſider his laborious inveſtigation merely as an object of curioſity; the geography of that fertile and extenſive region of India, diſtinguiſhed by the name of *Panjab*, with which we are at preſent little acquainted, may ſoon become very intereſting. If, on the one hand, that firm foundation on which the Britiſh empire in India ſeems

to be eſtabliſhed, by the ſucceſsful termination of the late war, remains unſhaken;—if, on the other hand, the Seiks, a confederacy of ſeveral independent ſtates, ſhall continue to extend their dominions with the ſame rapidity that they have advanced ſince the beginning of the current century; it is highly probable that the enterprizing commercial ſpirit of the one people, and the martial ardour of the other, who ſtill retain the activity and ardour natural to men in the earlieſt ages of ſocial union, may give riſe to events of the greateſt moment. The frontiers of the two ſtates are approaching gradually nearer and nearer to each other, the territories of the Seiks having reached to the weſtern bank of the river Jumnah, while thoſe of the Nabob of Oude ſtretch along its eaſtern bank. This Nabob, the ally or tributary of the Eaſt India Company, is ſupported by a brigade of the Bengal army, conſtantly ſtationed on his weſtern frontier. Ren. Mem. Introd. p. cxvi. In a poſition ſo contiguous, rivalry for power, interference of intereſt, and innumerable other cauſes of jealouſy and diſcord, can hardly fail of terminating, ſooner or later, in open hoſtility. The Seiks poſſeſs the whole Soubah of Lahore, the principal part of Moultan, and the weſtern part of Delhi. The dimenſions of this tract are about 400 Britiſh miles from N. W. to S. E., varying in breadth from 320 to 150 miles. Their capital city is Lahore. Little is known concerning their government and political maxims; but they are repreſented as mild. In their mode of making war, they are unqueſtionably ſavage and cruel. Their army conſiſts almoſt entirely of horſe; of which they can bring at leaſt 100,000 into the field. Maj. Ren. Mem. 2d edit. Introd. p. cxxi. cxxii. and p. 365. See alſo Mr. Craufurd's Sketches, 2d edit. vol. ii. p. 263, &c.

NOTE

NOTE V. Sect. I. p. 17.

It is ſurpriſing that Alexander did not receive, in the provinces contiguous to India, ſuch an account of the periodical rains in that country, as to ſhew him the impropriety of carrying on military operations there while theſe continued. His expedition into India commenced towards the end of Spring, Arrian, lib. iv. c. 22., when the rains were already begun in the mountains from which all the rivers in the Panjab flow, and of courſe they muſt have been conſiderably ſwelled before he arrived on their banks, Rennel, p. 268.—He paſſed the Hydaſpes at Midſummer, about the height of the rainy ſeaſon. In a country through which ſo many large rivers run, an army on ſervice at this time of the year muſt have ſuffered greatly. An accurate deſcription of the nature of the rains and inundations in this part of India, is given by Arrian, lib. v. c. 9.; and one ſtill fuller may be found in Strabo, lib. xv. 1013.—It was of what they ſuffered by theſe that Alexander's ſoldiers complained, Strabo, lib. xv. 1021. D.; and not without reaſon, as it had rained inceſſantly during ſeventy days, Diod. Sicul. xvii. c. 94.—A circumſtance which marks the accuracy with which Alexander's officers had attended to every thing in that part of India, deſerves notice. Ariſtobulus, in his Journal, which I have mentioned, obſerves that, though heavy rains fell in the mountains, and in the country near to them, in the plains below not ſo much as a ſhower fell. Strabo, lib. xv. 1013. B. 1015. B. Major Rennel was informed by a perſon of character, who had reſided in this diſtrict of India, which is now ſeldom viſited by Europeans, that during great part of the S. W. monſoon, or at leaſt in the months of July, Auguſt, and part of September, which is the rainy ſeaſon in moſt other parts of India, the atmoſphere

in the Delta of the Indus is generally clouded, but no rain falls except very near the sea. Indeed, very few showers fall during the whole season. Captain Hamilton relates, that when he visited Tatta, no rain had fallen for three years before. Memoirs, p. 288.—Tamerlane, who, by the vicinity of the seat of his government to India, had the means of being well informed concerning the nature of the country, avoided the error of Alexander, and made his Indian campaign during the dry season. As Nadir Shah, both when he invaded India, A.D. 1738, and in his return next year, marched through the same countries with Alexander, and nearly in the same line of direction, nothing can give a more striking idea of the persevering ardour of the Macedonian conqueror, than the description of the difficulties which Nadir Shah had to surmount, and the hardships which his army endured. Though possessed of absolute power and immense wealth, and distinguished no less by great talents than long experience in the conduct of war, he had the mortification to lose a great part of his troops in crossing the rivers of the Panjab, in penetrating through the mountains to the north of India, and in conflicts with the fierce natives inhabiting the countries which stretch from the banks of the Oxus to the frontiers of Persia. An interesting account of his retreat and sufferings is given in the Memoirs of Khojeh Abdulkurren, a Cashmerian of distinction, who served in his army.

NOTE VI. Sect. I. p. 19.

That a fleet so numerous should have been collected in such a short time, is apt to appear, at first sight, incredible. Arrian, however, assures us, that in specifying this number, he followed Ptolemy, the Son of Lagus, whose authority he considered to be of the greatest weight, lib.

lib. vi. c. 3. But as the Panjab country is full of navigable rivers, on which all the intercourſe among the natives was carried on, it abounded with veſſels ready conſtructed to the conqueror's hands, ſo that he might eaſily collect that number. If we could give credit to the account of the invaſion of India by Semiramis, no fewer than four thouſand veſſels were aſſembled in the Indus to oppoſe her fleet. Diod. Sicul. lib. ii. c. 74.—It is remarkable that when Mahmoud of Gaznah invaded India, a fleet was collected on the Indus to oppoſe him, conſiſting of the ſame number of veſſels. We learn from the Ayeen Akbery, that the inhabitants of this part of India ſtill continue to carry on all their communication with each other by water; the inhabitants of the Circar of Tatta alone have not leſs than forty thouſand veſſels of various conſtructions. Vol. ii. p. 143.

NOTE VII. Sect. I. p. 20.

All theſe particulars are taken from the Indian Hiſtory of Arrian, a work different from that already mentioned, and one of the moſt curious treatiſes tranſmitted to us from antiquity. The firſt part of it conſiſts of extracts from the account given by Nearchus of the climate and ſoil of India, and the manners of the natives. The ſecond contains that officer's journal of his voyage from the mouth of the Indus to the bottom of the Perſian Gulf. The peruſal of it gives riſe to ſeveral obſervations. —1. It is remarkable that neither Nearchus, nor Ptolemy, nor Ariſtobulus, nor even Arrian, once mention the voyage of Scylax. This could not proceed from their being unacquainted with it, for Herodotus was a favourite author in the hands of every Greek who had any pretenſions to literature. It was probably occaſioned by the

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reasons which they had to distrust the veracity of Scylax, of which I have already taken notice. Accordingly, in a speech which Arrian puts into the mouth of Alexander, he asserts that, except Bacchus, he was the first who had passed the Indus; which implies that he disbelieved what is related concerning Scylax, and was not acquainted with what Darius Hystaspes is said to have done in order to subject that part of India to the Persian crown. Arrian, vii. c. 10. This opinion is confirmed by Megasthenes, who resided a considerable time in India. He asserts that, except Bacchus and Hercules (to whose fabulous expeditions Strabo is astonished that he should have given any credit, lib. xv. p. 1007. D.) Alexander was the first who had invaded India; Arrian, Hist. Indic. c. 5. We are informed by Arrian, that the Assacani, and other people who possessed that country, which is now called the kingdom of Candahar, paid tribute, first to the Assyrians, and afterwards to the Medes and Persians; Hist. Indic. c. 1. As all the fertile provinces on the north-west of the Indus were antiently reckoned to be part of India, it is probable that what was levied from them is the sum mentioned in the tribute-roll, from which Herodotus drew his account of the annual revenue of the Persian empire, and that none of the provinces to the south of the Indus were ever subject to the Kings of Persia.——2. This voyage of Nearchus affords some striking instances of the imperfect knowledge which the antients had of any navigation different from that to which they were accustomed in the Mediterranean. Though the enterprising genius and enlarged views of Alexander prompted him to attempt opening an intercourse by sea, between India and his Persian dominions, yet both he and Nearchus knew so little of the ocean which they wished to explore, as to be apprehensive that it might be found impossible to navigate it, on account of impervious straits, or other obstacles. Hist. Indic. c. 20. Q. Curt. lib. ix. c. 9. When the

fleet

fleet arrived near the mouth of the Indus, the aſtoniſhment excited by the extraordinary flow and ebb of tide in the Indian ocean, a phenomenon (according to Arrian) with which Alexander and his ſoldiers were unacquainted, lib. vi. c. 19., is another proof of their ignorance in maritime ſcience. Nor is there any reaſon to be ſurpriſed at their aſtoniſhment, as the tides are hardly perceptible in the Mediterranean, beyond which the knowledge of the Greeks and Macedonians did not extend. For the ſame reaſon, when the Romans carried their victorious arms into the countries ſituated on the Atlantic Ocean, or on the ſeas that communicate with it, this new phenomenon of the tides was an object of wonder and terror to them. Cæſar deſcribes the amazement of his ſoldiers at a ſpring-tide, which greatly damaged the fleet with which he invaded Britain, and acknowledges that it was an appearance with which they were unacquainted; Bell. Gallic. lib. iv. c. 29. The tides on the coaſt near the mouth of the Indus are remarkably high, and the effects of them very great, eſpecially that ſudden and abrupt influx of the tide into the mouths of rivers or narrow ſtraits which is known in India, by the name of *The Bore*, and is accurately deſcribed by Major Rennell, Introd. xxiv. Mem. 278. In the Periplus Maris Erythræi, p. 26., theſe high tides are mentioned, and the deſcription of them nearly reſembles that of the Bore. A very exaggerated account of the tides in the Indian ocean is given by Pliny, Nat. Hiſt. lib. xiii. c. 25. Major Rennell ſeems to think, that Alexander and his followers could not be ſo entirely unacquainted with the phenomenon of the tides, as Herodotus had informed the Greeks, "that in the Red Sea there was a regular "ebb and flow of the tide every day;" lib. ii. c. 11. This is all the explanation of that phenomenon given by Herodotus. But among the antients there occur inſtances of inattention to facts, related by reſpectable authors, which appear ſurprizing in modern times. Though Herodotus,

dotus, as I have juſt now obſerved, gave an account of the voyage performed by Scylax at conſiderable length, neither Alexander, nor his hiſtorians, take any notice of that event. I ſhall afterwards have occaſion to mention a more remarkable inſtance of the inattention of later writers to an accurate deſcription which Herodotus had given of the Caſpian ſea. From theſe, and other ſimiliar inſtances which might have been produced, we may conclude, that the ſlight mention of the regular flow and ebb of tide in the Red Sea, is not a ſufficient reaſon for rejecting, as incredible, Arrian's account of the ſurprize of Alexander's ſoldiers when they firſt beheld the extraordinary effects of the tide at the mouth of the Indus.——3. The courſe of Nearchus's voyage, the promontories, the creeks, the rivers, the cities, the mountains, which came ſucceſſively in his view, are ſo clearly deſcribed, and the diſtances of ſuch as were moſt worthy of notice are ſo diſtinctly marked, that M. D'Anville, by comparing theſe with the actual poſition of the country, according to the beſt accounts of it, antient as well as modern, has been able to point out moſt of the places which Nearchus mentions, with a degree of certainty which does as much honour to the veracity of the Grecian navigator, as to the induſtry, learning, and penetration of the French geographer. Mem. de Literat. tom. xxx. p. 132, &c.

In modern times, the Red Sea is a name appropriated to the Arabian Gulf, but the antients denominated the ocean which ſtretches from that Gulf to India, the Erythræan ſea, from King Erythras, of whom nothing more is known than the name, which in the Greek language ſignifies red. From this caſual meaning of the word, it came to be believed, that it was of a different colour from other ſeas, and conſequently of more dangerous navigation.

NOTE VIII. Sect. I. p. 26.

Alexander was ſo intent on rendering this union of his ſubjects complete, that after his death there was found in his tablets or commentaries, (among other magnificent ſchemes, which he meditated,) a reſolution to build ſeveral new cities, ſome in Aſia, and ſome in Europe, and to people thoſe in Aſia with Europeans, and thoſe in Europe with Aſiatics, "that, (ſays the Hiſtorian,) "by intermarriages, and exchange of good offices, the "inhabitants of theſe two great continents might be gra-"dually moulded into a ſimilarity of ſentiments, and "become attached to each other with mutual affection." Diod. Sicul. lib. xviii. c. 4.

The Oriental Hiſtorians have mingled the little that they know concerning the tranſactions of European nations, particularly concerning the reign of Alexander the Great, and his conqueſt of Perſia, with ſo many fabulous and incredible circumſtances, that hardly any attention is due to them. Though they miſrepreſented every event in his life, they entertained an high idea of his great power, diſtinguiſhing him by the appellation of *Eſcander Dhúlcarnein*, i. e. the *Two-horned*, in alluſion to the extent of his dominions, which, according to them, reached from the weſtern to the eaſtern extremity of the earth. Herbelot. Bib. Orient. Article *Eſcander*. Anc. Univ. Hiſt. vol. v. 8vo. edit. p. 433. Richardſon's Diſſert. prefixed to his Dictionary of the Perſian and Arabic, p. xii. Whether the Hiſtorians of Indoſtan have given an account of Alexander's invaſion of India with greater accuracy, cannot be known, until ſome of their works, written in the Sanſkreet, are tranſlated. That ſome traditional knowledge of Alexander's invaſion of India is

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ſtill preſerved in the northern provinces of the Peninſula, is manifeſt from ſeveral circumſtances. The Rajahs of Chitore, who are eſteemed the moſt ancient eſtabliſhment of Hindoo Princes, and the nobleſt of the Rajahpout tribes, boaſt of their deſcent from Porus, famous as well in the eaſt as in the weſt for his gallant oppoſition to the Macedonian conqueror. Orme's Fragm. p. 5. Major Rennell has informed me, by accounts lately received from India, and confirmed by a variety of teſtimonies, that, in the country of Kuttore, the eaſtern extreme of the antient Bactria, a people who claimed to be the deſcendants of Alexander's followers, were exiſting when Tamerlane invaded that province. In Bijore, a country more to the weſt in the ſame diſtrict, the Bazira of Alexander, there is a tribe at this day which traces its origin to certain perſons left there by the conqueror when he paſſed through that province. Both Abul Fazel, and Soojah Rae, an eaſtern Hiſtorian of good reputation, report this tradition without any material variation. The latter, indeed, adds, that theſe Europeans, if we may call them ſo, continued to preſerve that aſcendancy over their neighbours, which their anceſtors may be ſuppoſed to have poſſeſſed when they firſt ſettled here. Although we ſhould reject this pedigree as falſe, yet the bare claim argues the belief of the natives, for which there muſt have been ſome foundation, that Alexander not only conquered Bijore, but alſo transferred that conqueſt to ſome of his own countrymen. Rennel Mem. 2d edit. p. 162. The people of Bijore had likewiſe an high idea of Alexander's extenſive authority; and they, too, denominated him the *Two-horned*, agreeably to the ſtriking emblem of power in all the eaſtern languages. Ayeen Akbery, xi. 194. Many inſtances of this emblem being uſed, will occur to every perſon accuſtomed to read the ſacred Scriptures.

NOTE

NOTE IX. Sect. I. p. 28.

It seems to be an opinion generally received, that Alexander built only two cities in India, Nicæa, and Bucephalia, situated on the Hydaspes, the modern Chelum, and that Craterus superintended the building of both. But it is evident, from Arrian, lib. v. c. ult., that he built a third city on the Acesines, now the Jenaub, under the direction of Hephæstion; and if it was his object to retain the command of the country, a place of strength on some of the rivers to the south of the Hydaspes seems to have been necessary for that purpose. This part of India has been so little visited in modern times, that it is impossible to point out with precision the situation of these cities. If P. Tieffenthaler were well founded in his conjecture, that the river now called Rauvee is the Acesines of Arrian, Bernouilli, vol. i. p. 39., it is probable that this city was built somewhere near Lehore, one of the most important stations in that part of India, and reckoned in the Ayeen Akbery to be a city of very high antiquity. But Major Rennell, in my opinion, gives good reasons for supposing the Jenaub to be the Acesines of the ancients.

NOTE X. Sect. I. p. 28.

The religious scruples which prevented the Persians from making any voyage by sea, were known to the ancients. Pliny relates of one of the Magi, who was sent on an embassy from Tiridates to the emperor Nero, "Navigare noluerat, quoniam exspuere in Maria, aliisque "mortalium necessitatibus violare naturam eam, fas non "putant;" Nat. Hist. lib. xxx. c. 2. This aversion to the

the ſea they carried ſo far, that, according to the obſervation of a well-informed Hiſtorian, there was not a city of any note in their empire built upon the ſea-coaſt; Ammian. Marcel. lib. xxiii. c. 6. We learn from Dr. Hyde, how intimately theſe ideas were connected with the doctrines of Zoroaſter; Rel. Vet. Perſ. cap. vi. In all the wars of the Perſians with Greece, the fleets of the Great King conſiſted entirely of ſhips furniſhed by the Phenicians, Syrians, the conquered provinces of the Leſſer Aſia, and the iſlands adjacent. Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus mention the quota furniſhed by each country in order to compoſe the fleet of twelve hundred ſhips with which Xerxes invaded Greece, and among theſe there is not one belonging to Perſia. At the ſame time it is proper to obſerve, that, according to Herodotus, whoſe authority is unexceptionable with regard to this point, Ariabigines, a ſon of Darius, acted as admiral of the Perſian fleet, and had ſeveral ſatraps of high rank under his command, and both Perſians and Medes ſerved as ſoldiers on board it; Herod. lib. vii. c. 96, 97. By what motives, or what authority, they were induced to act in this manner, I cannot explain. From ſome religious ſcruples, ſimilar to thoſe of the Perſians, many of the natives of Indoſtan, in our own time, refuſe to embark on board a ſhip, and to ſerve at ſea; and yet on ſome occaſions, the ſepoys in the ſervice of the European powers have got the better of theſe ſcruples.

NOTE XI. Sect. I. p. 29.

M. Le Baron de Sainte-Croix, in his ingenious and learned Critique des Hiſtoriens d'Alexandre le Grand, p. 96., ſeems to entertain ſome doubt with reſpect to the number of the cities which Alexander is ſaid to have built.

built. Plutarch de Fort Alex. affirms, that he founded no fewer than ſeventy. It appears from many paſſages in antient authors, that the buildings of cities, or, what may be conſidered as the ſame, the eſtabliſhment of fortified ſtations, was the mode of maintaining their authority in the conquered nations, adopted not only by Alexander, but by his ſucceſſors. Seleucus and Antiochus, to whom the greater part of the Perſian empire became ſubject, were no leſs remarkable for founding new cities than Alexander, and theſe cities ſeem fully to have anſwered the purpoſes of the founders, as they effectually prevented (as I ſhall afterwards have occaſion to obſerve) the revolt of the conquered provinces. Though the Greeks, animated with the love of liberty and of their native country, refuſed to ſettle in the Perſian empire while under the dominion of its native monarchs, even when allured by the proſpect of great advantage, as M. de Sainte-Croix remarks, the caſe became perfectly different, when that empire was ſubjected to their own dominion, and they ſettled there, not as ſubjects but as maſters. Both Alexander and his ſucceſſors diſcovered much diſcernment in chooſing the ſituation of the cities which they built. Seleucia, which Seleucus founded, is a ſtriking inſtance of this, and became hardly inferior to Alexandria in number of inhabitants, in wealth, and in importance; Mr. Gibbon, vol. i. p. 250. M. D'Anville, Mem. de Literat. xxx.

NOTE XII. Sect. I. p. 32.

It is from Juſtin we receive the ſlender knowledge we have of the progreſs which Seleucus made in India, lib. xv. c. 4. But we cannot rely on his evidence, unleſs when it is confirmed by the teſtimony of other authors. Plutarch ſeems to aſſert, that Seleucus had pene-

trated far into India; but that respectable writer is more eminent for his discernment of characters, and his happy selection of those circumstances which mark and discriminate them, than for the accuracy of his historical researches. Pliny, whose authority is of greater weight, seems to consider it as certain, that Seleucus had carried his arms into districts of India which Alexander never visited; Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. vi. c. 17. The passage in which this is mentioned is somewhat obscure, but it seems to imply, that Seleucus had marched from the Hyphasis to the Hysudrus, from thence to Palibothra, and from that to the mouth of the Ganges. The distances of the principal stations in this march are marked, the whole amounting to 2244 Roman miles. In this sense M. Bayer understands the words of Pliny; Histor. Regni Græcorum Bactriani, p. 37. But to me it appears highly improbable, that the Indian expedition of Seleucus could have continued so long as to allow time for operations of such extent. If Seleucus had advanced as far into India as the mouth of the Ganges, the ancients must have had a more accurate knowledge of that part of the country than they seem ever to have possessed.

NOTE XIII. Sect. I. p. 33.

Major Rennell gives a magnificent idea of this, by informing us, that "the Ganges, after it has escaped "from the mountainous tract in which it had wandered "above eight hundred miles," Mem. p. 233. "receives "in its course through the plains eleven rivers, some of "them as large as the Rhine, and none smaller than the "Thames, besides as many more of lesser note;" p. 257.

NOTE

NOTE XIV. Sect. I. p. 33.

In fixing the position of Palibothra, I have ventured to differ from Major Rennell, and I venture to do so with diffidence. According to Strabo, Palibothra was situated at the junction of the Ganges and another river; lib. xv. p. 1028. A. Arrian is still more explicit. He places Palibothra at the confluence of the Ganges and Erranaboas, the last of which he describes as less than the Ganges or Indus, but greater than any other known river; Hist. Ind. c. 10. This description of its situation corresponds exactly with that of Allahabad. P. Boudier, to whose observations the geography of India is much indebted, says, that the Jumna, at its junction with the Ganges, appeared to him not inferior in magnitude to that river; D'Anville, Antiq. de l'Inde, p. 53. Allahabad is the name which was given to that city by the Emperor Akbar, who erected a strong fortress there; an elegant delineation of which is published by Mr. Hodges, N° IV. of his Select Views in India. Its ancient name, by which it is still known among the Hindoos, is *Praeg*, or *Piyag*, and the people of the district are called *Praegi*, which bears a near resemblance to Prasij, the ancient appellation of the kingdom of which Palibothra was the capital; P. Tiessenthaler, Bernouilli, tom. i. 223. D'Anville, p. 56. Allahabad is such a noted seat of Hindoo devotion, that it is denominated *The King of Worshipped Places*; Ayeen Akberry, vol. ii. p. 35. "The territory around it, to "the extent of forty miles, is deemed holy ground. "The Hindoos believe, that when a man dies in this "place, whatever he wishes for he will obtain in his "next regeneration. Although they teach that suicide "in general will be punished with torments hereafter, "yet they consider it as meritorious for a man to kill

"himſelf at Allahabad;" Ayeen Akbery, iii. 256. P. Tieſſenthaler deſcribes the various objects of veneration at Allahabad, which are ſtill viſited with great devotion by an immenſe number of pilgrims; Bernouilli, tom. i. 224. From all theſe circumſtances, we may conclude it to be a place of great antiquity, and in the ſame ſituation with the Palibothra of antiquity.

MAJOR RENNELL has been induced to place Palibothra on the ſame ſite with Patna, chiefly by two conſiderations. ——1. From having learned that on or near the ſite of Patna ſtood anciently a very large city named *Patelpoot-ber* or *Patalipputra*, which nearly reſembles the ancient name of Palibothra. Although there is not now a confluence of two rivers at Patna, he was informed that the junction of the Soane with the Ganges, now twenty-two miles above Patna, was formerly under the walls of that city. The rivers of India ſometimes change their courſe in a ſingular manner, and he produces ſome remarkable inſtances of it. But even ſhould it be allowed, that the accounts which the natives give of this variation in the courſe of the Soane were perfectly accurate, I queſtion whether Arrian's deſcription of the magnitude of Erranaboas be applicable to that river, certainly not ſo juſtly as to the Jumna. —— 2. He ſeems to have been influenced, in ſome degree, by Pliny's Itinerary, or Table of Diſtances from Taxila (the modern Attock) to the mouth of the Ganges; Nat. Hiſt. lib. vi. c. 17. But the diſtances in that Itinerary are marked ſo inaccurately, and in ſome inſtances are ſo palpably erroneous, that one cannot found upon them with much ſecurity. According to it, Palibothra is ſituated four hundred and twenty-five miles below the confluence of the Jumna and Ganges. The actual diſtance, however, between Allahabad and Patna, is not more than two hundred Britiſh miles. A diſagreement ſo conſiderable cannot be accounted for, without ſuppoſing

posing some extraordinary error in the Itinerary, or that the point of conflux of the Jumna with the Ganges has undergone a change. For the former of these suppositions there is no authority (as far as I know) from any manuscript, or for the latter from any tradition. Major Rennell has produced the reasons which led him to suppose the site of Palibothra to be the same with that of Patna; Memoires, p. 49—54. Some of the objections which might be made to this supposition he has foreseen, and endeavoured to obviate; and after all that I have added to them, I shall not be surprised, if, in a geographical discussion, my readers are disposed to prefer his decision to mine.

NOTE XV. Sect. I. p. 36.

I do not mention a short inroad into India by Antiochus the Great, about one hundred and ninety-seven years posterior to the invasion of his ancestor Seleucus. We know nothing more of this transaction, than that the Syrian monarch, after finishing the war he carried on against the two revolted provinces of Parthia and Bactria, entered India, and concluding a peace with Sophagasenus, a King of the country, received from him a number of elephants, and a sum of money; Polyb. lib. x. p. 597, &c. lib. xi. p. 651. edit. Casaub. Justin. lib. xv. c. 4. Bayer's Hist. Regn. Græcor. Bactr. p. 69, &c.

NOTE XVI. Sect. I. p. 37.

A fact cursorily related by Strabo, and which has escaped the inquisitive industry of M. de Guignes, coincides remarkably with the narrative of the Chinese writers, and confirms it. The Greeks, he says, were deprived of

Bactria by tribes or hordes of Scythian Nomades, who came from the country beyond the Jaxartes, and are known by the names of Asij, Parsani, Tachari, and Sacaraali; Strab. lib. xi. p. 779. A. The Nomades of the ancients were nations who, like the Tartars, subsisted entirely, or almost entirely, as shepherds, without agriculture.

NOTE XVII. Sect. I. p. 39.

As the distance of Arsinoe, the modern Suez, from the Nile is considerably less than that between Berenice and Coptos, it was by this route that all the commodities imported into the Arabian Gulf, might have been conveyed with most expedition and least expence into Egypt. But the navigation of the Arabian Gulf, which even in the present improved state of nautical science is slow and difficult, was in ancient times considered by the nations around it to be so extremely perilous, that it led them to give such names to several of its promontories, bays, and harbours, as convey a striking idea of the impression which the dread of this danger had made upon their imagination. The entry into the Gulf they called *Bab-mandeb*, the gate or port of affliction. To a harbour not far distant, they gave the name of *Mete*, i. e. Death. A headland adjacent they called *Gardefan*, the Cape of Burial. Other denominations of similar import are mentioned by the author to whom I am indebted for this information. Bruce's Travels, vol. i. p. 442, &c. It is not surprising then, that the staple of Indian trade should have been transferred from the northern extremity of the Arabian Gulf to Berenice, as by this change a dangerous navigation was greatly shortened. This seems to have been the chief reason that induced Ptolemy to establish

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the port of communication with India at Berenice, as there were other harbours on the Arabian Gulf which were considerably nearer than it to the Nile. At a later period, after the ruin of Coptos by the Emperor Diocleſian, we are informed by Abulfeda, Deſcript. Egypt, edit. Michaelis, p. 77, that Indian commodities were conveyed from the Red Sea to the Nile, by the ſhorteſt route, viz. from Coſſeir, probably the Philoteras Portus of Ptolemy, to Cous, the Vicus Apollinis, a journey of four days. The ſame account of the diſtance was given by the natives to Dr. Pococke, Travels, vol. i. p. 87. In conſequence of this, Cous, from a ſmall village, became the city in upper Egypt next in magnitude to Foſtat, or Old Cairo. In proceſs of time, from cauſes which I cannot explain, the trade from the Red Sea by Coſſeir removed to Kene, farther down the river than Cous, Abulf, p. 13. 77. D'Anville Egypte, 196—200. In modern times, all the commodities of India, imported into Egypt, are either brought by ſea from Gidda to Suez, and thence carried on camels to Cairo, or are conveyed by land-carriage by the caravan returning from the Pilgrimage to Mecca, Niebuhr Voyage, tom. i. p. 224, Volney, i. 188, &c. This, as far as I have been able to trace it, is a complete account of all the different routes by which the productions of the Eaſt have been conveyed to the Nile, from the firſt opening of that communication. It is ſingular that P. Sicard, Mem. des Miſſions dans le Levant. tom. ii. p. 157, and ſome other reſpectable writers, ſhould ſuppoſe Coſſeir to be the Berenice founded by Ptolemy, although Ptolemy has laid down its latitude at 23° 50′, and Strabo has deſcribed it as nearly under the ſame parallel with that of Syené, lib. ii. p. 195, D. In conſequence of this miſtake, Pliny's computation of the diſtance between Berenice and Coptos, at two hundred and fifty-eight miles, has been deemed erroneous. Pococke, p. 87. But as Pliny not only mentions the total diſtance, but names the

different ſtations in the journey, and ſpecifies the number of miles between each; and as the Itinerary of Antonius coincides exactly with his account, D'Anville Egypte, p. 21, there is no reaſon to call in queſtion the accuracy of it.

NOTE XVIII. Sect. I. p. 41.

Major Rennell is of opinion, "that under the "Ptolemies, the Egyptians extended their navigation to "the extreme point of the Indian continent, and even "ſailed up the Ganges to Palibothra," on the ſame ſite (according to him) with the modern Patna. Introd. p. xxxvi. But had it been uſual to ſail up the Ganges as high as Patna, the interior parts of India muſt have been better known to the ancients than they ever were, and they would not have continued to derive their information concerning them from Megaſthenes alone. Strabo begins his deſcription of India, in a very remarkable manner. He requeſts his readers to peruſe with indulgence the account which he gives of it, as it was a country very remote, and few perſons had viſited it; and of theſe, many having ſeen only a ſmall part of the country, related things either from hear-ſay, or, at the beſt, what they had haſtily remarked while they paſſed through it in the courſe of military ſervice, or on a journey. Strabo, lib. xv. p. 1005. B. He takes notice that few of the traders from the Arabian Gulf ever reached the Ganges. Ibid. 1006. C. He aſſerts, that the Ganges enters the ſea by one mouth, ibid, 1011. C.; an error into which he could not have fallen if the navigation of that river had been common in his time. He mentions indeed the ſailing up the Ganges, ibid. 1010, but it is curſorily in a ſingle ſentence; whereas, if ſuch a conſiderable inland voyage of above four hundred

dred miles through a populous and rich country, had been cuſtomary, or even if it had ever been performed by the Roman, or Greek, or Egyptian traders, it muſt have merited a particular deſcription, and muſt have been mentioned by Pliny and other writers, as there was nothing ſimilar to it in the practice of navigation among the antients. It is obſerved by Arrian. (or whoever is the author of the Periplus Maris Erythræi,) that previous to the diſcovery of a new route to India, which ſhall be mentioned afterwards, the commerce with that country was carried on in ſmall veſſels which ſailed round every bay, p. 32. Ap. Hudſ. Geogr. Min. Veſſels of ſuch light conſtruction, and which followed this mode of ſailing, were ill fitted for a voyage ſo diſtant as that round Cape Comorin, and up the Bay of Bengal, to Patna. It is not improbable, that the merchants whom Strabo mentions as having reached the Ganges, may have travelled thither by land, either from the countries towards the mouth of the Indus, or from ſome part of the Malabar coaſt, and that the navigation up the Ganges, of which he caſually takes notice, was performed by the natives in veſſels of the country. This opinion derives ſome confirmation from his remarks upon the bad ſtructure of the veſſels which frequented that part of the Indian ocean. From his deſcription of them, p. 1012. C. it is evident that they were veſſels of the country.

NOTE XIX. Sect. I. p. 43.

The erroneous ideas of many intelligent writers of antiquity with reſpect to the Caſpian Sea, though well known to every man of letters, are ſo remarkable, and afford ſuch a ſtriking example of the imperfection of their geographical knowledge, that a more full account

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of them may not only be acceptable to ſome of my readers, but in endeavouring to trace the various routes by which the commodities of the Eaſt were conveyed to the nations of Europe, it becomes neceſſary to enter into ſome detail concerning their various ſentiments with reſpect to this matter. 1. According to Strabo, the Caſpian is a bay, that communicates with the great Northern ocean, from which it iſſues at firſt, by an arrow ſtrait, and then expands into a ſea extending in breadth five hundred ſtadia, lib. xi. p. 773. A. With him Pomponius Mela agrees, and deſcribes the ſtrait by which the Caſpian is connected with the ocean, as of conſiderable length, and ſo narrow that it had the appearance of a river, lib. iii. c. 5. edit. Pliny likewiſe gives a ſimilar deſcription of it, Nat. Hiſt. lib. vi. c. 13. In the age of Juſtinian, this opinion concerning the communication of the Caſpian Sea with the ocean, was ſtill prevalent; Coſm. Indicopl. Topog. Chriſt. lib. ii. p. 138. C. 2. Some early writers, by a miſtake ſtill more ſingular, have ſuppoſed the Caſpian Sea to be connected with the Euxine. Quintus Curtius, whoſe ignorance of geography is notorious, has adopted this error, lib. vii. c. 7. edit. 3. Arrian, though a much more judicious writer, and who by reſiding for ſome time in the Roman province of Cappadocia, of which he was governor, might have obtained more accurate information, declares in one place, the origin of the Caſpian Sea to be ſtill unknown, and it is doubtful whether it was connected with the Euxine, or with the great Eaſtern ocean which ſurrounds India; lib. vii. c. 16. In another place he aſſerts, that there was a communication between the Caſpian and the Eaſtern ocean; lib. v. c. 26. Theſe errors appear more extraordinary, as a juſt deſcription had been given of the Caſpian by Herodotus, near five hundred years before the age of Strabo. "The Caſpian (ſays he) is a ſea

"by

" by itſelf unconnected with any other. Its length is " as much as a veſſel with oars can ſail in fifteen days, " its greateſt breadth as much as it can ſail in eight " days;" lib. i. c. 203. Ariſtotle deſcribes it in the ſame manner, and with his uſual preciſion contends that it ought to be called a great lake, not a ſea; Meteorolog. lib. ii. Diodorus Siculus concurs with them in opinion, vol. ii. lib. xviii. p. 261. None of thoſe authors determine whether the greateſt length of the Caſpian was from North to South, or from Eaſt to Weſt. In the antient maps which illuſtrate the geography of Ptolemy, it is delineated, as if its greateſt length extended from Eaſt to Weſt. In modern times the firſt information concerning the true form of the Caſpian which the people of Europe received, was given by Anthony Jenkinſon an Engliſh merchant, who with a caravan from Ruſſia travelled along a conſiderable part of its coaſt in the year 1558: Hakluyt Collect. vol. i. p. 334. The accuracy of Jenkinſon's deſcription was confirmed by an actual ſurvey of that ſea made by order of Peter the Great, A. D. 1718; and it is now aſcertained not only that the Caſpian is unconnected with any other ſea, but that its length from North to South is conſiderably more than its greateſt breadth from Eaſt to Weſt. The length of the Caſpian from North to South is about ſix hundred and eighty miles, and in no part more than two hundred and ſixty miles in breadth from Eaſt to Weſt, Coxe's Travels, vol. ii. p. 257. The proportional difference of its length and breadth accords nearly with that mentioned by Herodotus. From this detail, however, we learn how the ill-founded ideas concerning it, which were generally adopted, gave riſe to various wild ſchemes of conveying Indian commodities to Europe by means of its ſuppoſed communication with the Euxine ſea, or with the Northern ocean. It is an additional

additional proof of the attention of Alexander the Great to every thing conducive to the improvement of commerce, that a ſhort time before his death he gave directions to fit out a ſquadron in the Caſpian, in order to ſurvey that ſea, and to diſcover whether it was connected either with the Euxine or Indian ocean; Arrian, lib. vii. c. 16.

NOTE XX. Sect. I. p. 53.

From this curious detail, we learn how imperfect antient navigation was, even in its moſt improved ſtate. The voyage from Berenice to Ocelis could not have taken thirty days, if any other courſe had been held than that of ſervilely following the windings of the coaſt. The voyage from Ocelis to Muſiris would be (according to Major Rennell) fifteen days' run for an European ſhip in the modern ſtile of navigation, being about ſeventeen hundred and fifty marine miles, on a ſtraight courſe; Introd. p. xxxvii. It is remarkable, that though the Periplus Maris Erythræi was written after the voyage of Hippalus, the chief object of the author of it is to deſcribe the antient courſe along the coaſts of Arabia and Perſia, to the mouth of the Indus, and from thence down the weſtern ſhore of the continent to Muſiris. I can account for this only by ſuppoſing, that from the unwillingneſs of mankind to abandon old habits, the greater part of the traders from Berenice ſtill continued to follow that route to which they were accuſtomed. To go from Alexandria to Muſiris, required (according to Pliny) ninety-four days. In the year 1788, the Boddam, a ſhip belonging to the Engliſh Eaſt-India Company, of a thouſand tons burthen, took only fourteen days more to complete

plete her voyage from Portſmouth to Madras. Such are the improvements which have been made in navigation.

NOTE XXI. Sect. II. p. 54.

It was the opinion of Plato, that in a well regulated commonwealth the citizens ſhould not engage in commerce, nor the ſtate aim at obtaining maritime power. Commerce, he contends, would corrupt the purity of their morals, and by entering into the ſea-ſervice, they would be accuſtomed to find pretexts for juſtifying conduct ſo inconſiſtent with what was manly and becoming, as would gradually relax the ſtrictneſs of military diſcipline. It had been better for the Athenians, he aſſerts, to have continued to ſend annually the ſons of ſeven of their principal citizens to be devoured by the Minotaur, than to have changed their antient manners, and to have become a maritime power. In that perfect republic, of which he delineates the form, he ordains that the capital ſhould be ſituated at leaſt ten miles from the ſea; De Legibus, lib. iv. ab initio. Theſe ideas of Plato were adopted by other philoſophers. Ariſtotle enters into a formal diſcuſſion of the queſtion, Whether a ſtate rightly conſtituted ſhould be commercial or not? and though abundantly diſpoſed to eſpouſe ſentiments oppoſite to thoſe of Plato, he does not venture to decide explicitly with reſpect to it; De Repub. lib. vii. c. 6. In ages when ſuch opinions prevail, little information concerning commerce can be expected.

NOTE XXII. Sect. II. p. 58.

Pliny, lib. ix. c. 35. Principium ergo culmenque omnium rerum prætij Margaritæ tenent. In lib. xxxvii. c. 4., he

c. 4., he affirms, Maximum in rebus humanis prætium, non ſolum inter gemmas, habet Adamas. Theſe two paſſages ſtand in ſuch direct contradiction to one another, that it is impoſſible to reconcile them, or to determine which is the moſt conformable to truth. I have adhered to the former, becauſe we have many inſtances of the exorbitant price of pearls, but none, as far as I know, of diamonds having been purchaſed at a rate ſo high. In this opinion I am confirmed by a paſſage in Pliny, lib. xix. c. 1.; having mentioned the exorbitant price of *Aſbeſtos*, he ſays, " æquat prætia " excellentum Margaritarum;" which implies, that he conſidered pearls to be of higher price than any other commodity.

NOTE XXIII. Sect. II. p. 58.

Pliny has devoted two entire books of his Natural Hiſtory, lib. xii. and xiii. to the enumeration and deſcription of the ſpices, aromatics, ointments, and perfumes, the uſe of which luxury had introduced among his countrymen. As many of theſe were the productions of India, or of the countries beyond it, and as the trade with the Eaſt was carried on to a great extent in the age of Pliny, we may form ſome idea of the immenſe demand for them, from the high price at which they continued to be ſold in Rome. To compare the prices of the ſame commodities in ancient Rome, with thoſe now paid in our own country, is not a gratification of curioſity merely, but affords a ſtandard by which we may eſtimate the different degree of ſucceſs with which the Indian trade has been conducted in antient and modern times. Many remarkable paſſages in antient authors, concerning the extravagant price of precious ſtones and pearls among

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the Romans, as well as the general uſe of them by perſons of all ranks, are collected by Meurſius de Lux. Romanorum, cap. 5.; and by Staniſlaus Robierzyckius, in his treatiſe on the ſame ſubject, lib. ii. c. 1. The Engliſh reader will receive ſufficient information from Dr. Arbuthnot, in his valuable Tables of ancient coins, weights, and meaſures, p. 172, &c.

NOTE XXIV. Sect. II. p. 61.

M. Mahudel, in a memoir read in the academy of inſcriptions and belles lettres in the year 1719, has collected the various opinions of the ancients concerning the nature and origin of ſilk, which tend all to prove their ignorance with regard to it. Since the publication of M. Mahudel's memoir, P. du Halde has deſcribed a ſpecies of ſilk, of which I believe he communicated the firſt notice to the moderns. "This is "produced by ſmall inſects nearly reſembling ſnails. "They do not form cocoons either round or oval like "the ſilk-worm, but ſpin very long threads, which "faſten themſelves to trees and buſhes as they are driven "by the wind. Theſe are gathered and wrought into "ſilk ſtuffs, coarſer than thoſe produced by domeſtic "ſilk-worms. The inſects which produce this coarſe "ſilk are wild." Deſcription de l'Empire de la Chine, tom. ii. folio, p. 207. This nearly reſembles Virgil's deſcription,

> Velleraque ut foliis depectant tenuia Seres.
> Georg. II. 121.

An attentive reader of Virgil will find, that, beſides all the other qualities of a great deſcriptive poet, he poſſeſſed an extenſive knowledge of natural hiſtory. The nature

nature and productions of the wild silk-worms are illustrated at greater length in the large collection of Memoires concernant l'Histoire, les Sciences, les Arts, &c. des Chinois, tom. ii. p. 575, &c.; and by Pere de Mailla, in his voluminous History of China, tom. xiii. p. 434. It is a singular circumstance in the history of silk, that, on account of its being an excretion of a worm, the Mahomedans consider it as an unclean dress; and it has been decided, with the unanimous assent of all the doctors, that a person wearing a garment made entirely of silk, cannot lawfully offer up the daily prayers enjoined by the Koran. Herbal. Bibl. Orient. artic. *Harir*.

NOTE XXV. Sect. II. p. 61.

If the use of the cotton manufactures of India had been common among the Romans, the various kinds of them would have been enumerated in the Law de Publicanis et Vectigalibus, in the same manner as the different kinds of spices and precious stones. Such a specification would have been equally necessary for the direction both of the merchant and of the tax-gatherer.

NOTE XXVI. Sect. II. p. 62.

This part of Arrian's Periplus has been examined with great accuracy and learning by Lieutenant Wilford; and from his investigation it is evident, that the Plithana of Arrian is the modern Pultanah, on the southern banks of the river Godavery, two hundred and seventeen British miles south from Baroach; that the position of Tagara is the same with that of the modern Dowlatabad, and the high grounds across which

the goods were conveyed to Baroach, are the Ballagant mountains. The bearings and diſtances of theſe different places, as ſpecified by Arrian, afford an additional proof (were that neceſſary) of the exact information which he had received concerning this diſtrict of India; Aſiatic Reſearches, vol. i. p. 369, &c.

NOTE XXVII. Sect. II. p. 69.

Strabo acknowledges his neglect of the improvements in geography which Hipparchus had deduced from aſtronomical obſervations, and juſtifies it by one of thoſe logical ſubtleties which the antients were apt to introduce into all their writings. "A geographer," ſays he, (i. e. a deſcriber of the earth,) "is to pay no "attention to what is out of the earth; nor will men, "engaged in conducting the affairs of that part of the "earth which is inhabited, deem the diſtinction and "diviſions of Hipparchus worthy of notice." Lib. ii. 194. C.

NOTE XXVIII. Sect. II. p. 70.

What an high opinion the antients had of Ptolemy we learn from Agathemerus, who flouriſhed not long after him. "Ptolemy," ſays he, "who reduced geo-"graphy into a regular ſyſtem, treats of every thing "relating to it, not careleſsly, or merely according "to ideas of his own, but attending to what had "been delivered by more antient authors, he adopted "from them whatever he found conſonant to truth." Epitome Geogr. lib. i. c. 6. edit. Hudſon. From the ſame admiration of his work, Agathodæmon, an artiſt of Alexandria, prepared a ſeries of maps for the illuſ-

tration of it, in which the position of all the places mentioned by Ptolemy, with their longitude and latitude, is laid down precisely according to his ideas. Fabric. Biblioth. Græc. iii. 412.

NOTE XXIX. Sect. II. p. 71.

As these public Surveys and Itineraries furnished the antient geographers with the best information concerning the position and distances of many places, it may be proper to point out the manner in which they were completed by the Romans. The idea of a general survey of the whole empire was first formed by Julius Cæsar, and, having been begun by him under authority of a decree of the senate, was finished by Augustus. As Rome was still far inferior to Greece in science, the execution of this great undertaking was committed to three Greeks, men of great abilities, and skilled in every part of philosophy. The survey of the eastern division of the empire was finished by Zenodorus in fourteen years five months and nine days. That of the northern division was finished by Theodorus in twenty years eight months and ten days. The southern division was finished in twenty-five years one month and ten days. Æthici Cosmographia apud Geographos, editos à Hen. Stephano, 1577. p. 107. This undertaking was worthy of those illustrious persons who planned it, and suited to the magnificence of a great people. Besides this general survey, every new war produced a new delineation and measurement of the countries which were the seat of it. We may conclude from Vegetius, Instit. Rei Militaris, lib. iii. c. 6. that every governor of a Roman province was furnished with a description of it; in which were specified the distance of places in miles, the nature of the roads, the bye-roads, the short cuts, the mountains, the rivers, &c.; all these,

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ſays he, were not only deſcribed in words, but were delineated in a map, that, in deliberating concerning his military movements, the eyes of a general might aid the deciſions of his mind.

NOTE XXX. Sect. II. p. 71.

The conſequence of this miſtake is remarkable. Ptolemy, lib. vii. c. i., computes the latitude of Barrygaza, or Baroach, to be 17° 20′; and that of Cory, or Cape Comorin, to be 13° 20′, which is the difference of four degrees preciſely; whereas the real difference between theſe two places is nearly fourteen degrees.

NOTE XXXI. Sect. II. p. 72.

Ramusio, the publiſher of the moſt antient and perhaps the moſt valuable Collection of Voyages, is the firſt perſon, as far as I know, who takes notice of this ſtrange error of Ptolemy; Viaggi, vol. i. p. 181. He juſtly obſerves, that the author of the circumnavigation of the Erythræan Sea had been more accurate, and had deſcribed the peninſula of India, as extending from north to ſouth; Peripl. p. 24. 29.

NOTE XXXII. Sect. II. p. 75.

This error of Ptolemy juſtly merits the name of *enormous*, which I have given to it; and it will appear more ſurprising when we recollect, that he muſt have been acquainted, not only with what Herodotus relates concerning the circumnavigation of Africa by order of one of the Egyptian Kings, lib. iv. c. 4., but with the opinion of Eratoſthenes, who held that the great extent

tent of the Atlantic ocean was the only thing which prevented a communication between Europe and India by ſea; Strab. Geogr. lib. i. p. 113. A. This error, however, muſt not be imputed wholly to Ptolemy. Hipparchus, whom we may conſider as his guide, had taught that the earth is not ſurrounded by one continuous ocean, but that it is ſeparated by different iſthmuſes, which divide it into ſeveral large baſons; Strab. lib. i. p. 11. B. Ptolemy, having adopted this opinion, was induced to maintain that an unknown country extended from Cattigara to Praſſum on the ſouth-eaſt coaſt of Africa; Geogr. lib. vii. c. 3. and 5. As Ptolemy's ſyſtem of geography was univerſally received, this error ſpread along with it. In conformity to it the Arabian geographer Edriſſi, who wrote in the twelfth century, taught that a continued tract of land ſtretched eaſtward from Sofala on the African coaſt, until it united with ſome part of the Indian continent; D'Anville, Antiq. p. 187. Annexed to the firſt volume of Geſta Dei per Francos, there is an ancient and very rude map of the habitable globe, delineated according to this idea of Ptolemy. M. Goſſellin, in his map entitled Ptolemæi Syſtema Geographicum, has exhibited this imaginary tract of land which Ptolemy ſuppoſes to have connected Africa with Aſia; Geographie des Grecs analyſée.

NOTE XXXIII. Sect. II. p. 76.

In this part of the Diſquiſition, as well as in the map prepared for illuſtrating it, the geographical ideas of M. D'Anville, to which Major Rennell has given the ſanction of his approbation, Introd. p. xxxix., have been generally adopted. But M. Goſſellin has lately publiſhed, "The "Geography of the Greeks analiſed; or, the Syſtems "of

"of Eratosthenes, Strabo, and Ptolemy, compared with "each other, and with the Knowledge which the Mo-"derns have acquired;" a learned and ingenious work, in which he differs from his countrymen with respect to many of his determinations. According to M. Gossellin, the Magnum Promontorium, which M. D'Anville concludes to be Cape Romania, at the southern extremity of the peninsula of Malacca, is the point of Bragu, at the mouth of the great river Ava; near to which he places Zaba, supposed by M. D'Anville, and by Barros, Decad. ii. liv. vi. c. 1., to be situated on the strait of Sincapura or Malacca. The Magnus Sinus of Ptolemy he holds to be the same with the Gulf of Martaban, not the Gulf of Siam, according to M. D'Anville's decision. The position of Cattigara, as he endeavours to prove, corresponds to that of Mergui, a considerable port on the west coast of the kingdom of Siam, and that Thinæ, or Sinæ Metropolis, which M. D'Anville removes as far as Sin-hoa, in the kingdom of Cochin China, is situated on the same river with Mergui, and now bears the name of Tana-serim. The Ibadij Insula of Ptolemy, which M. D'Anville determines to be Sumatra, he contends is one of that cluster of small isles which lie off this part of the coast of Siam; p. 137—148. According to M. Gossellin's system, the antients never failed through the Streights of Malacca, had no knowledge of the island of Sumatra, and were altogether unacquainted with the Eastern ocean. If to any of my readers these opinions appear to be well founded, the navigation and commerce of the antients in India must be circumscribed within limits still more confined than those which I have allotted to them. From the Ayeen Akbery, vol. ii. p. 7., we learn that Cheen was an antient name of the kingdom of Pegu: as that country borders upon Ava, where M. Gossellin places the Great Promontory, this near resemblance of names may appear, perhaps, to confirm his opinion that Sinæ Metropolis was situated

on this coaſt, and not ſo far Eaſt as M. D'Anville has placed it.

As Ptolemy's geography of this eaſtern diviſion of Aſia is more erroneous, obſcure, and contradictory than in any other part of his work, and as all the manuſcripts of it, both Greek and Latin, are remarkably incorrect in the two chapters which contain the deſcription of the countries beyond the Ganges, M. D'Anville, in his Memoir concerning the limits of the world known to the antients beyond the Ganges, has admitted into it a larger portion of conjecture than we find in the other reſearches of that cautious geographer. He likewiſe builds more than uſual upon the reſemblances between the ancient and modern names of places, though at all times he diſcovers a propenſity, perhaps too great, to trace theſe, and to reſt upon them. Theſe reſemblances are often, indeed, very ſtriking, and have led him to many happy diſcoveries. But in peruſing his works, it is impoſſible, I ſhould think, not to perceive that ſome which he mentions are far fetched and fanciful. Whenever I follow him, I have adopted only ſuch concluſions as ſeem to be eſtabliſhed with his accuſtomed accuracy.

NOTE XXXIV. Sect. II. p. 85.

The Author of the Circumnavigation of the Erythræan Sea has marked the diſtances of many of the places which he mentions, with ſuch accuracy as renders it a nearer approach, than what is to be found in any writer of antiquity, to a complete ſurvey of the coaſt from Myos-hormus, on the weſt ſide of the Arabian Gulf, along the ſhores of Ethiopia, Arabia, Perſia, and Caramania, to the mouth of the Indus, and thence down the weſt coaſt of the Indian Peninſula to Muſiris and Barace. This adds to

to the value of this ſhort treatiſe, which, in every other reſpect, poſſeſſes great merit. It may be conſidered as a remarkable proof of the extent and accuracy of this author's intelligence concerning India, that he is the only antient writer who appears in any degree to have been acquainted with the great diviſion of the country, which ſtill ſubſiſts, viz. Indoſtan Proper, comprehending the northern provinces of the Peninſula, and the Deccan, comprehending the ſouthern provinces. "From Bary-"gaza (ſays he) the continent ſtretches to the ſouth; "hence that diſtrict is called Dachinabades, for, in the "language of the country, the ſouth is called Dachanos;" Peripl. p. 29. As the Greeks and Romans, when they adopt any foreign name, always gave it a termination peculiar to their own language, which the grammatical ſtructure of both tongues rendered, in ſome degree, neceſſary, it is evident that Dechanos is the ſame with Deccan, which word has ſtill the ſame ſignification, and is ſtill the name of that diviſion of the Peninſula. The northern limit of the Deccan at preſent is the river Narbudda, where our Author likewiſe fixes it. Peripl. ibid.

NOTE XXXV. Sect. II. p. 88.

Though, in deducing the latitudes of places from obſervations of the ſun or ſtars, the antient aſtronomers neglected ſeveral corrections, which ought to have been applied, their reſults were ſometimes exact to a few minutes, but at other times they appear to have been erroneous to the extent of two or even three degrees, and may perhaps be reckoned, one with another, to have come within half a degree of the truth. This part of the antient geography would therefore have been tolerably accurate, if there had been a ſufficient number of ſuch

determinations. Theſe however, were far from being numerous, and appear to have been confined to ſome of the more remarkable places in the countries which ſurround the Mediterranean ſea.

When, from want of more accurate obſervations, the latitude was inferred from the length of the longeſt or ſhorteſt day, no great degree of preciſion was, in any caſe, to be expected, and leaſt of all in the vicinity of the Equator. An error of a quarter of an hour, which, without ſome mode of meaſuring time more accurate than ancient obſervers could employ, was not eaſily avoided, might produce, in ſuch ſituations, an error of four degrees in the determination of the latitude.

With reſpect to places in the torrid zone, there was another recourſe for determining the latitude. This was by obſerving the time of year when the ſun was vertical to any place, or when bodies that ſtood perpendicular to the horizon had no ſhadow at noon-day; the ſun's diſtance from the Equator at that time, which was known from the principles of aſtronomy, was equal to the latitude of the place. We have inſtances of the application of this method in the determination of the parallels of Syene and Meroe. The accuracy which this method would admit of, ſeems to be limited to about half a degree, and this only on the ſuppoſition that the obſerver was ſtationary; for if he was travelling from one place to another, and had not an opportunity of correcting the obſervation of one day by that of the day following, he was likely to deviate much more conſiderably from the truth.

With reſpect to the longitude of places, as eclipſes of the moon are not frequent, and could ſeldom be of uſe for determining it, and only when there were aſtronomers

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to obſerve them with accuracy, they may be left out of the account altogether when we are examining the geography of remote countries. The differences of the meridians of places were therefore antiently aſcertained entirely by the bearings and diſtances of one place from another, and of conſequence all the errors of reckonings, ſurveys, and itineraries, fell chiefly upon the longitude, in the ſame manner as happens at preſent in a ſhip which has no method of determining its longitude, but by comparing the dead-reckoning with the obſervations of the latitude; though with this difference, that the errors, to which the moſt ſkilful of the antient navigators was liable, were far greater than what the moſt ignorant ſhipmaſter of modern times, provided with a compaſs, can well commit. The length of the Mediterranean meaſured, in degrees of longitude, from the Pillars of Hercules, to the Bay of Iſſus, is leſs than forty degrees; but in Ptolemy's maps it is more than ſixty, and, in general, its longitudes, counting from the meridian of Alexandria, eſpecially toward the Eaſt, are erroneous nearly in the ſame proportion. It appears, indeed, that in remote ſeas, the coaſts were often delineated from an imperfect account of the diſtances ſailed, without the leaſt knowledge of the bearings or direction of the ſhip's courſe. Ptolemy, it is true, uſed to make an allowance of about one-third for the winding of a ſhip's courſe. Geogr. lib. i. c. 12.; but it is plain, that the application of this general rule could ſeldom lead to an accurate concluſion. Of this there is a ſtriking inſtance in the form which that geographer has given to the Peninſula of India. From the Barygazenum Promontorium to the Place marked Locus unde ſolvunt in Chryſen navigantes, that is, from Surat on the Malabar coaſt, to about Narſapour on the Coromandel Coaſt, the diſtance meaſured along the ſea-ſhore is nearly the ſame with what it is in reality; that is, about five hundred and twenty leagues. But the miſtake

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in the direction is astonishing, for the Malabar and Coromandel Coast, instead of stretching to the south, and intersecting one another at Cape Comorin, in a very acute angle, are extended by Ptolemy almost in the same straight line from west to east, declining a little to the south. This coast is, at the same time, marked with several bays and promontories, nearly resembling, in their position, those which actually exist on it. All these circumstances compared together, point out very clearly what were the materials from which the antient map of India was composed. The ships which had visited the coast of that country, had kept an account of the time which they took to sail from one place to another, and had marked as they stood along shore, on what hand the land lay, when they shaped their course across a bay or doubled a promontory. This imperfect journal, with an inaccurate account, perhaps of the latitude of one or two places, was probably all the information concerning the coast of India, which Ptolemy was able to procure. That he should have been able to procure no better information from merchants who sailed with no particular view of exploring the coast, will not appear wonderful, if we consider that even the celebrated Periplus of Hanno would not enable a geographer to lay down the coast of Africa with more precision, than Ptolemy has delineated that of India.

NOTE XXXVI. Sect. II. p. 97.

The introduction of the silk-worm into Europe, and the effects which this produced, came under the view of Mr. Gibbon, in writing the History of the Emperor Justinian, and though it was an incident of subordinate importance only, amidst the multiplicity of great transactions which must have occupied his attention, he has examined

this event with an accuracy, and related it with a precision, which would have done honour to an author who had no higher object of research. Vol. iv. p. 71, &c. Nor is it here only that I am called upon to ascribe to him this merit. The subject of my inquiries has led me several times upon ground which he had gone over, and I have uniformly received information from the industry and discernment with which he has surveyed it.

NOTE XXXVII. Sect. III. p. 101.

This voyage, together with the observations of Abu Zeid al Hasan of Siraf, was published by M. Renaudot, A. D. 1718, under the title of "Anciennes Relations des "Indes, et de la Chine, de deux Voyageurs Mohametans, "qui y allerent dans le Neuvieme Siecle, traduites de "Arabe, avec des remarques sur les principaux endroits "de ces Relations." As M. Renaudot, in his remarks, represents the literature and police of the Chinese in colours very different from those of the splendid descriptions which a blind admiration had prompted the Jesuits to publish, two zealous missionaries have called in question the authenticity of these relations, and have asserted that the authors of them had never been in China; P. Premare Lettr. edifiantes et curieuses, tom. xix. p. 420, &c. P. Parennin, ibid. tom. xxi. p. 158, &c. Some doubts concerning their authenticity were entertained likewise by several learned men in England, on account of M. Renaudot's having given no notice of the manuscript which he translated, but that he found it in the library of M. le Comte de Seignelay. As no person had seen the manuscript since that time, the doubts increased, and M. Renaudot was charged with the crime of imposing upon the public. But the Colbert Manuscripts having been deposited

ſited in the King's Library, as (fortunately for literature) moſt private collections are in France, M. de Guignes, after a long ſearch, diſcovered the identical manuſcript to which M. Renaudot refers. It appears to have been written in the twelfth century; Journal des Scavans, Dec. 1764, p. 315, &c. As I had not the French edition of M. Renaudot's book, my references are made to the Engliſh tranſlation. The relation of the two Arabian Travellers is confirmed, in many points, by their countryman Maſſoudi, who publiſhed his treatiſe on univerſal hiſtory, to which he gives the fantaſtical title of "Meadows of Gold, and Mines of Jewels," a hundred and ſix years after their time. From him, likewiſe, we receive ſuch an account of India in the tenth century, as renders it evident that the Arabians had then acquired an extenſive knowledge of that country. According to his deſcription, the Peninſula of India was divided into four kingdoms. The firſt was compoſed of the provinces ſituated on the Indus, and the rivers which fall into it; the capital of which was Moultan. The capital of the ſecond kingdom was Canoge, which, from the ruins of it ſtill remaining, appears to have been a very large city; Rennell's Memoirs, p. 54. In order to give an idea of its populouſneſs, the Indian hiſtorians aſſert, that it contained thirty thouſand ſhops, in which betelnut was ſold, and ſixty thouſand ſets of muſicians and ſingers, who paid a tax to government: Feriſhta, tranſlated by Dow, vol. i. p. 32. The third kingdom was Cachemire. Maſſoudi, as far as I know, is the firſt author who mentions this paradiſe of India, of which he gives a ſhort but juſt deſcription. The fourth is the kingdom of Guzerate, which he repreſents as the greateſt and moſt powerful; and he concurs with the two Arabian Travellers, in giving the ſovereigns of it the appellation of Belhara. What Maſſoudi relates concerning India is more worthy of notice, as he himſelf had viſited that country; Notices et

Extraits des Manuſcrits de la Bibliothique du Roi, tom. i. p. 9, 10. Maſſoudi confirms what the two Arabian travellers relate, concerning the extraordinary progreſs of the Indians in aſtronomical ſcience. According to his account a temple was built during the reign of Brahmin, the firſt monarch of India, with twelve towers, repreſenting the twelve ſigns of the zodiac; and in which was delineated a view of all the ſtars as they appear in the heavens. In the ſame reign was compoſed the famous Sind-Hind, which ſeems to be the ſtandard treatiſe of Indian aſtronomy; Notices, &c. tom. i. p. 7. Another Arabian author, who wrote about the middle of the fourteenth century, divides India into three parts. The northern, comprehending all the provinces on the Indus. The middle, extending from Guzerate to the Ganges. The ſouthern, which he denominates Comar, from Cape Comorin; Notices, &c. tom. ii. p. 46.

NOTE XXXVIII. Sect. III. p. 103.

The naval ſkill of the Chineſe ſeems not to have been ſuperior to that of the Greeks, the Romans, or Arabians. The courſe which they held from Canton to Siraf, near the mouth of the Perſian Gulf, is deſcribed by their own authors. They kept as near as poſſible to the ſhore until they reached the iſland of Ceylon, and then doubling Cape Comorin, they ſailed along the weſt ſide of the Peninſula, as far as the mouth of the Indus, and thence ſteered along the coaſt to the place of their deſtination; Mem. de Literat. tom. xxxii. p. 367. Some authors have contended, that both the Arabians and Chineſe were well acquainted with the mariner's compaſs, and the uſe of it in navigation; but it is remarkable that in the Arabic, Turkiſh, and Perſian

ſian languages there is no original name for the compaſs. They commonly call it *Beſola*, the Italian name, which ſhews that the knowledge of this uſeful inſtrument was communicated to them by the Europeans. There is not one ſingle obſervation, of antient date, made by the Arabians on the variation of the needle, or any inſtruction deduced from it, for the aſſiſtance of navigators. Sir John Chardin, one of the moſt learned and beſt informed travellers who has viſited the Eaſt, having been conſulted upon this point, returns for anſwer, " I boldly aſſert, that the Aſiatics are be-
" holden to us for this wonderful inſtrument, which
" they had from Europe a long time before the Portu-
" gueſe conqueſts. For, firſt, their compaſſes are ex-
" actly like ours, and they buy them of Europeans as
" much as they can, ſcarce daring to meddle with their
" needles themſelves. Secondly, it is certain that the
" old navigators only coaſted it along, which I impute
" to their want of this inſtrument to guide and in-
" ſtruct them in the middle of the ocean. We can-
" not pretend to ſay that they were afraid of venturing
" far from home, for the Arabians, the firſt navigators in the world in my opinion, at leaſt for the
" eaſtern ſeas, have, time out of mind, ſailed from
" the bottom of the Red Sea, all along the coaſt of
" Africa; and the Chineſe have always traded with
" Java and Sumatra, which is a very conſiderable
" voyage. So many iſlands uninhabited and yet pro-
" ductive, ſo many lands unknown to the people I
" ſpeak of, are a proof that the old navigators had not
" the art of ſailing on the main ſea. I have nothing but
" argument to offer touching this matter, having never
" met with any perſon in Perſia or the Indies to in-
" form me when the compaſs was firſt known among
" them, though I made inquiry of the moſt learned
" men in both countries. I have ſailed from the Indies
" to

"to Persia in Indian ships, when no European has "been on board but myself. The pilots were all In-"dians, and they used the fore-staff and quadrant for "their observations. These instruments they have "from us, and made by our artists, and they do not "in the least vary from ours, except that the charac-"ters are Arabic. The Arabians are the most skilful "navigators of all the Asiatics or Africans; but nei-"ther they nor the Indians make use of charts; and "they do not much want them: some they have, but "they are copied from ours, for they are altogether "ignorant of perspective." Inquiry when the Mahomedans first entered China, p. 141, &c. When M. Niebhuhr was at Cairo, he found a magnetic needle in the possession of a Mahomedan, which served to point out the Kaaba, and he gave it the name of *El Magnatis*, a clear proof of its European origin. Voyage en Arabie, tom. ii. p. 169.

NOTE XXXIX. Sect. III. p. 103.

Some learned men, Cardan, Scaliger, &c. have imagined that the Vasa Murrhina, particularly described by Pliny, Nat. Hist. lib. xxxvii., and occasionally mentioned by several ancient authors both Greek and Roman, were the true porcelain of China. M. l'Abbé Le Blanc and M. Larcher have examined this opinion, with full as much industry and erudition as the subject merited, in two Dissertations published in Mem. de Literat. tom. xliii. From them it is evident that the Vasa Murrhina were formed of a transparent stone dug out of the earth in some of the eastern provinces of Asia. These were imitated in vessels of coloured glass. As both were beautiful and rare, they were sold at a very high price to the luxurious citizens of Rome.

NOTE

NOTE XL. Sect. III. p. 105.

The progreſs of Chriſtianity, and of Mahomedaniſm, both in China and India, is atteſted by ſuch evidence as leaves no doubt with reſpect to it. This evidence is collected by Aſſemanus, Biblioth. Orient. vol. iv. p. 437, &c. 521, &c.; and by M. Renaudot, in two Diſſertations annexed to Anciennes Relations; and by M. de la Croze, Hiſtoire de Chriſtianiſme des Indes. In our own age, however, we know that the number of proſelytes to either of theſe religions is extremely ſmall, eſpecially in India. A Gentoo conſiders all the diſtinctions and privileges of his caſt, as belonging to him by an excluſive and incommunicable right. To convert, or to be converted, are ideas equally repugnant to the principles moſt deeply rooted in his mind; nor can either the Catholic or Proteſtant miſſionaries in India boaſt of having overcome theſe prejudices, except among a few in the loweſt caſts, or of ſuch as have loſt their caſt altogether. This laſt circumſtance is a great obſtacle to the progreſs of Chriſtianity in India. As Europeans eat the fleſh of that animal which the Hindoos deem ſacred, and drink intoxicating liquors, in which practices they are imitated by the converts to Chriſtianity, this ſinks them to a level with the Pariars, the moſt contemptible and odious race of men. Some Catholic miſſionaries were ſo ſenſible of this, that they affected to imitate the dreſs and manner of living of Brahmins, and refuſed to aſſociate with the Pariars, or to admit them to the participation of the ſacraments. But this was condemned by the apoſtolic legate Tournon, as inconſiſtent with the ſpirit and precepts of the Chriſtian religion; Voyage aux Indes Orientales, par M. Sonnerat

rat, tom. i. p. 58. note. Notwithstanding the labours of missionaries for upwards of two hundred years, (says a late ingenious writer,) and the establishments of different Christian nations, who support and protect them, out of, perhaps, one hundred millions of Hindoos, there are not twelve thousand Christians, and those almost entirely *Chancalas*, or outcasts. Sketches relating to the history, religion, learning, and manners of the Hindoos, p. 48. The number of Mahomedans, or Moors, now in Indostan is supposed to be near ten millions; but they are not the original inhabitants of the country, but the descendants of adventurers who have been pouring in from Tartary, Persia, and Arabia, ever since the invasion of Mahmoud of Gazna, A. D. 1002, the first Mahomedan conqueror of India. Orme Hist. of Military Transact. in Indostan, vol. i. p. 24. Herbelot, Biblioth. Orient. artic. *Gaznaviah*. As the manners of the Indians in ancient times seem to have been, in every respect, the same with those of the present age, it is probable that the Christians and Mahomedans, said to be so numerous in India and China, were chiefly foreigners, allured thither by a lucrative commerce, or their descendants. The number of Mahomedans in China has been considerably increased by a practice, common among them, of buying children in years of famine, whom they educate in the Mahomedan religion. Hist. Gener. des Voyages, tom. vi. p. 357.

NOTE XLI. Sect. III. p. 110.

From the Chronicle of Andrew Dandulo, Doge of Venice, who was elevated to that high station at a time when his countrymen had established a regular trade with Alexandria, and imported from it all the productions of the East, it was natural to expect some

 information

information concerning their early trade with that country; but, except an idle tale concerning ſome Venetian ſhips which had ſailed to Alexandria about the year 828, contrary to a decree of the ſtate, and which ſtole thence the body of St. Mark; Murat. Script. Rer. Ital. vol. xii. lib. 8. c. 2. p. 170.; I find no other hint concerning the communication between the two countries. On the contrary, circumſtances occur which ſhew that the reſort of Europeans to Egypt had ceaſed, almoſt entirely, for ſome time. Prior to the ſeventh and eighth centuries, the greater part of the public deeds in Italy and in other countries of Europe, were written upon paper fabricated of the Egyptian Papyrus; but after that period, as Europeans ſeldom ventured to trade in Alexandria, almoſt all charters and other deeds are written upon parchment. Murat. Antiq. Ital. Medii Ævi, vol. iii. p. 832. I have been induced both in the text and in this note, to ſtate theſe particulars concerning the interruption of trade between the Chriſtians and Mahomedans ſo fully, in order to correct an error into which ſeveral modern authors have fallen, by ſuppoſing, that ſoon after the firſt conqueſts of the Caliphs, the trade with India returned into its ancient channels, and the merchants of Europe reſorted with the ſame freedom as formerly to the ports of Egypt and Syria.

NOTE XLII. Sect. III. p. 114.

It is proper to remark (ſays Mr. Stewart) that the Indians have an admirable method of rendering their religion lucrative, it being uſual for the Faquirs to carry with them, in their pilgrimages from the ſea-coaſts to the interior parts, pearls, corals, ſpices, and other precious articles, of ſmall bulk, which they ex-

change, on their return, for gold duſt, muſk, and other things of a ſimilar nature, concealing them eaſily in their hair, and in the cloths round their middle, carrying on in proportion to their numbers, no inconſiderable traffic by theſe means. Account of the kingdom of Thibet, Philoſ. Tranſact, vol. lxvii. part ii. p. 483.

NOTE XLIII. Sect. III. p. 123.

Caffá is the moſt commodious ſtation for trade in the Black Sea. While in the hands of the Genoeſe, who kept poſſeſſion of it above two centuries, they rendered it the ſeat of an extenſive and flouriſhing commerce. Even under all the diſadvantages of its ſubjection, at preſent, to the Turkiſh government, it continues to be a place of conſiderable trade. Sir John Chardin, who viſited it A. D. 1672, relates that during his reſidence of forty days there, above four hundred ſhips arrived at Caffa, or ſailed from it. Voyages, i. 48. He obſerved there ſeveral remains of Genoeſe magnificence. The number of its inhabitants, according to M. Peyſonel, amounts ſtill to eighty thouſand. Commerce de la Mer Noire, tom. i. p. 15. He deſcribes its trade as very great.

NOTE XLIV. Sect. III. p. 124.

The rapacity and inſolence of the Genoeſe ſettled in Conſtantinople, are painted by Nicephorus Gregoras, an eye-witneſs of their conduct, in very ſtriking colours. "They," ſays he, "now," i. e. about the year 1340, "dreamed that they had acquired the dominion of the "ſea, and claimed an excluſive right to the trade of "the Euxine, prohibiting the Greeks to ſail to the "Mæotis, the Cherſoneſus, or any part of the coaſt be-

"yond the mouth of the Danube, without a licence from "them. This exclusion they extended likewise to the "Venetians, and their arrogance proceeded so far as to "form a scheme of imposing a toll upon every vessel "passing through the Bosphorus." Lib. xviii. c. 2. § 1.

NOTE XLV. Sect. III. p. 125.

A permission from the Pope was deemed so necessary to authorise a commercial intercourse with infidels, that long after this period, in the year 1454, Nicholas V. in his famous bull in favour of Prince Henry of Portugal, among other privileges, grants him a licence to trade with Mahomedans, and refers to similar concessions from Pope Martin V.; and Eugenius to Kings of Portugal. Leibnitz Codex Jur. Gent. Diplomat. Pars I. p. 489.

NOTE XLVI. Sect. III. p. 127.

Neither Jovius, the professed panegyrist of the Medici, nor Jo. M. Brutus, their detractor, though both mention the exorbitant wealth of the family, explain the nature of the trade by which it was acquired. Even Machiavel, whose genius delighted in the investigation of every circumstance which contributed to aggrandize or depress nations, seems not to have viewed the commerce of his country as a subject that merited any elucidation. Denina, who has entitled the first chapter of his eighteenth book, "The Origin of the Medici and "the Commencement of their Power and Grandeur," furnishes little information with regard to the trade carried on by them. This silence of so many authors is a

proof that historians had not yet begun to view commerce as an object of such importance in the political state of nations, as to enter into any detail concerning its nature and effects. From the references of different writers to Scipio Ammirato, Istorie Fiorentine; to Pagnini, Della Decima ed altri gravezze della Mercatura di Fiorentini, and to Balducci, Practica della Mercatura, I should imagine that something more satisfactory might be learned concerning the trade both of the republic and the family of Medici; but I could not find any of these books either in Edinburgh or in London.

NOTE XLVII. Sect. III. p. 127.

Leibnitz has preserved a curious paper, containing the instructions of the republic of Florence to the two ambassadors sent to the Soldan of Egypt, in order to negociate this treaty with him, together with the report of these ambassadors on their return. The great object of the republic was to obtain liberty of trading in all parts of the Soldan's dominions, upon the same terms with the Venetians. The chief privileges which they solicited, were; 1. A perfect freedom of admission into every port belonging to the Soldan, protection while they continued in it, and liberty of departure at what time they chose. 2. Permission to have a consul, with the same rights and jurisdiction as those of the Venetians; and liberty to build a church, a warehouse, and a bath in every place where they settled. 3. That they should not pay for goods imported or exported higher duties than were paid by the Venetians. 4. That the effects of any Florentine who died in the dominions of the Soldan should be consigned to the consul. 5. That the gold and silver coin of Flo-

rence ſhould be received in payments. All theſe privileges (which ſhew on what equal and liberal terms Chriſtians and Mahomedans now carried on trade) the Florentines obtained; but from the cauſes mentioned in the text, they ſeem never to have acquired any conſiderable ſhare in the commerce with India. Leibnitz, Mantiſſa Cod. Jur. Gent. Diplom. Pars altera, p. 163.

NOTE XLVIII. Sect. III. p. 133.

The Eaſtern parts of Aſia are now ſo completely explored, that the firſt imperfect accounts of them, by Marco Polo, attract little of that attention which was originally excited by the publication of his travels; and ſome circumſtances in his narrative have induced different authors to juſtify this neglect, by calling in queſtion the truth of what he relates, and even to aſſert that he had never viſited thoſe countries which he pretends to deſcribe. He does not, ſay they, aſcertain the poſition of any one place by ſpecifying its longitude or latitude. He gives names to provinces and cities particularly in his deſcription of Cathay, which have no reſemblance to thoſe which they now bear. We may obſerve, however, that as Marco Polo ſeems to have been, in no degree, a man of ſcience, it was not to be expected that he ſhould fix the poſition of places with geographical accuracy. As he travelled through China, either in the ſuite of the great Khan, or in execution of his orders, it is probable that the names which he gives to different provinces and cities, are thoſe by which they were known to the Tartars, in whoſe ſervice he was, not their original Chineſe names. Some inaccuracies which have been obſerved in the relation of his travels, may be accounted for, by attending to one circumſtance, that it was not pub-

liſhed

liſhed from a regular journal, which, perhaps, the viciſſitudes in his ſituation, during ſuch a long ſeries of adventures, did not permit him to keep, or to preſerve. It was compoſed after his return to his native country, and chiefly from recollection. But notwithſtanding this diſadvantage, his account of thoſe regions of the Eaſt, towards which my inquiries have been directed, contains information with reſpect to ſeveral particulars altogether unknown in Europe at that time, the accuracy of which is now fully confirmed. Mr. Marſden, whoſe accuracy and diſcernment are well known, traces his deſcription of the iſland which he calls Java minor, evidently Sumatra; from which it is apparent that, as Marco Polo had reſided a conſiderable time in that iſland, he had examined ſome parts with care, and had inquired with diligence concerning others. Hiſt. of Sumat. p. 281. I ſhall mention ſome other particulars with reſpect to India, which though they relate to matters of no great conſequence, afford the beſt proof of his having viſited theſe countries, and of his having obſerved the manners and cuſtoms of the people with attention. He gives a diſtinct account of the nature and preparation of Sago, the principal article of ſubſiſtence among all the nations of Malayan race, and he brought the firſt ſpecimen of this ſingular production to Venice. Ramuſ. lib. iii. c. 16. He takes notice, likewiſe of the general cuſtom of chewing Betel, and his deſcription of the mode of preparing it is the ſame with that ſtill in uſe. Ramuſ. Viaggi, i. p. 55. D. 56. B. He even deſcends into ſuch detail as to mention the peculiar manner of feeding horſes in India, which ſtill continues. Ramuſ. p. 53. F. What is of greater importance, we learn from him that the trade with Alexandria continued when he travelled through India, to be carried on in the ſame manner as I conjectured it to have been in ancient times. The commodities of the

Eaſt were ſtill brought to the Malabar coaſt by veſſels of the country, and conveyed thence, together with pepper and other productions peculiar to that part of India, by ſhips which arrived from the Red Sea. Lib. iii. c. 27. This, perhaps, may account for the ſuperior quality which Sanudo aſcribes to the goods brought to the coaſt of Syria from the Perſian Gulf, above thoſe imported into Egypt by the Red Sea. The former were choſen and purchaſed in the places where they grew or where they were manufactured, by the merchants of Perſia, who ſtill continued their voyages to every part of the Eaſt; while the Egyptian merchants, in making up their cargoes, depended upon the aſſortment of goods brought to the Malabar coaſt by the natives. To ſome perſons in his own age, what Marco Polo related concerning the numerous armies and immenſe revenues of the Eaſtern Princes, appeared ſo extravagant, (though perfectly conſonant to what we now know concerning the population of China, and the wealth of Indoſtan,) that they gave him the name of *Meſſer Marco Milioni*. Prefat. de Ramuſ. p. 4. But among perſons better informed, the reception he met with was very different. Columbus, as well as the men of ſcience with whom he correſponded, placed ſuch confidence in the veracity of his relations, that upon them the ſpeculations and theories, which led to the diſcovery of the New World, were in a great meaſure founded. Life of Columbus by his Son, c. 7. and 8.

NOTE XLIX. Sect. III. p. 139.

In the year 1301, Joanna of Navarre, the wife of Philip le Bel King of France, having been ſome days in Bruges, was ſo much ſtruck with the grandeur and wealth of

of that city, and particularly with the ſplendid appearance of the citizens' wives, that ſhe was moved (ſays Guicciardini) by female envy to exclaim with indignation, "I "thought that I had been the only Queen here, but I find "there are many hundreds more." Deſcrit. de Paeſi Baſſi, p. 498.

NOTE L. Sect. III. p. 141.

In the hiſtory of the reign of Charles V., vol. i. p. 163., I obſerve, that, during the war excited by the famous League of Cambray, while Charles VIII. of France could not procure money at a leſs premium than forty-two per cent., the Venetians raiſed what ſums they pleaſed at five per cent. But this, I imagine, is not to be conſidered as the uſual commercial rate of intereſt at that period, but as a voluntary and public-ſpirited effort of the citizens, in order to ſupport their country at a dangerous criſis. Of ſuch laudable exertions, there are ſeveral ſtriking inſtances in the hiſtory of the republic. In the year 1379, when the Genoeſe, after obtaining a great naval victory over the Venetians, were ready to attack their capital, the citizens, by a voluntary contribution, enabled the ſenate to fit out ſuch a powerful armament as ſaved their country. Sabellicus, Hiſt. Rer. Venet. Dec. ii. lib. vi. p. 385. 390. In the war with Ferrara, which began in the year 1472, the ſenate relying upon the attachment of the citizens to their country, required them to bring all their gold and ſilver plate, and jewels, into the public treaſury, upon promiſe of paying the value of them at the concluſion of the war, with five per cent. of intereſt; and this requiſition was complied with cheerfully. Petr. Cyrnæus de Bello Ferrar. ap. Murat. Script. Rer. Ital. vol. xxi. p. 1016.

NOTE

NOTE LI. Sect. III. p. 142.

Two facts may be mentioned as proofs of an extraordinary extenſion of the Venetian trade at this period,——1. There is in Rymer's Great Collection, a ſeries of grants from the Kings of England, of various privileges and immunities to Venetian merchants trading in England, as well as ſeveral commercial treaties with the republic, which plainly indicate a conſiderable increaſe of their tranſactions in that country. Theſe are mentioned in their order by Mr. Anderſon, to whoſe patient induſtry and ſound underſtanding, every perſon engaged in any commercial reſearch muſt have felt himſelf greatly indebted on many occaſions.——2. The eſtabliſhment of a Bank by public authority, the credit of which was founded on that of the ſtate. In an age and nation ſo well acquainted with the advantages which commerce derives from the inſtitution of banks, it is unneceſſary to enumerate them. Mercantile tranſactions muſt have been numerous and extenſive before the utility of ſuch an inſtitution could be fully perceived, or the principles of trade could be ſo fully underſtood as to form the regulations proper for conducting it with ſucceſs. Venice may boaſt of having given the firſt example to Europe, of an eſtabliſhment altogether unknown to the ancients, and which is the pride of the modern commercial ſyſtem. The conſtitution of the Bank of Venice was originally founded on ſuch juſt principles, that it has ſerved as a model in the eſtabliſhment of banks in other countries, and the adminiſtration of its affairs has been conducted with ſo much integrity, that its credit has never been ſhaken. I cannot ſpecify the preciſe year in which the Bank of Venice was eſtabliſhed by a law of the State. Anderſon ſuppoſes it to have been A. D. 1157. Chron. Deduct. vol. i. p. 84.

Sandi

Sandi Stor. Civil. Venes. part II. vol. ii. p. 768. part III. vol. ii. p. 892.

NOTE LII. Sect. III. p. 143.

An Italian author of good credit, and a diligent inquirer into the antient hiſtory of its different governments, affirms, that if the ſeveral States which traded in the Mediterranean had united together, Venice alone would have been ſuperior to them all, in naval power and in extent of commerce. Denina Revolutions d'Italie traduits par l'Abbe Jardin, lib. xviii. c. 6. tom. vi. p. 339. About the year 1420, the Doge Mocenigo gives a view of the naval force of the republic, which confirms this deciſion of Denina. At that time it conſiſted of three thouſand trading veſſels, of various dimenſions, on board which were employed ſeventeen thouſand ſailors; of three hundred ſhips of greater force, manned by eight thouſand ſailors; and of forty-five large galeaſſes, or carracks, navigated by eleven thouſand ſailors. In public and private arſenals ſixteen thouſand carpenters were employed. Mar. Sanuto Vitede Duchi di Venezia, ap. Mur. Script. Rer. Ital. vol. xxii. p. 959.

NOTE LIII. Sect. III. p. 160.

When we take a view of the form and poſition of the habitable parts of Aſia and Africa, we will ſee good reaſons for conſidering the camel as the moſt uſeful of all the animals over which the inhabitants of theſe great continents have acquired dominion. In both, ſome of the moſt fertile diſtricts are ſeparated from each other by ſuch extenſive tracts of barren ſands, the ſeats of deſolation and drought, as ſeem to exclude the poſſibility of commu-

communication between them. But as the ocean, which appears, at first view, to be placed as an insuperable barrier between different regions of the earth, has been rendered, by navigation, subservient to their mutual intercourse, so, by means of the camel, which the Arabians emphatically call *The Ship of the Desert*, the most dreary wastes are traversed, and the nations which they disjoin are enabled to trade with one another. Those painful journies, impracticable by any other animal, the camel performs with astonishing dispatch. Under heavy burdens of six, seven, and eight hundred weight, they can continue their march during a long period of time, with little food or rest, and sometimes without tasting water for eight or nine days. By the wise œconomy of Providence, the camel seems formed of purpose to be the beast of burden in those regions where he is placed, and where his service is most wanted. In all the districts of Asia and Africa, where deserts are most frequent and extensive, the camel abounds. This is his proper station, and beyond this the sphere of his activity does not extend far. He dreads alike the accesses of heat and of cold, and does not agree even with the mild climate of our temperate zone. As the first trade in Indian commodities, of which we have any authentic account, was carried on by means of camels, Genesis, xxxvii. 25., and as it is by employing them that the conveyance of these commodities has been so widely extended over Asia and Africa, the particulars which I have mentioned concerning this singular animal appeared to be necessary towards illustrating this part of my subject. If any of my readers desire more full information, and wish to know how the ingenuity and art of man have seconded the intensions of Nature, in training the camel from his birth for that life of exertion and hardship to which he is destined, he may consult Histoire Naturelle, by M. le Comte de Buffon, artic. *Chameau et Dromedaire*, one of the most eloquent, and, as far as I can judge

judge from examining the authorities which he has quoted, one of the moſt accurate deſcriptions given by that celebrated writer. M. Volney, whoſe accuracy is well known, gives a deſcription of the manner in which the camel performs its journey, which may be agreeable to ſome of my readers. "In travelling through the deſert, camels "are chiefly employed, becauſe they conſume little, and "carry a great load. His ordinary burden is about ſeven "hundred and fifty pounds; his food, whatever is given "him, ſtraw, thiſtles, the ſtones of dates, beans, barley, "&c. With a pound of food a day, and as much water, "he will travel for weeks. In the journey from Cairo to "Suez, which is forty or forty-ſix hours, they neither "eat nor drink; but theſe long faſts, if often repeated, "wear them out. Their uſual rate of travelling is very "ſlow, hardly above two miles an hour; it is vain to "puſh them, they will not quicken their pace, but, if al-"lowed ſome ſhort reſt, they will travel fifteen or eighteen "hours a day." Voyage, tom. ii. p. 383.

NOTE LIV. Sect. III. p. 162.

In order to give an adequate idea of the extenſive circulation of Indian commodities by land carriage, it would be neceſſary to trace the route, and to eſtimate the number of the various caravans by which they are conveyed. Could this be executed with accuracy, it would be a curious ſubject of geographical reſearch, as well as a valuable addition to commercial hiſtory. Though it is inconſiſtent with the brevity which I have uniformly ſtudied in conducting this Diſquiſition, to enter into a detail of ſo great length, it may be proper here, for illuſtrating this part of my ſubject, to take ſuch a view of two caravans which viſit Mecca, as may enable my readers to eſtimate more juſtly the magnitude of their commercial tranſactions. The firſt is the caravan which takes its departure from

from Cairo in Egypt, and the other from Damaſcus in Syria; and I ſelect theſe, both becauſe they are the moſt conſiderable, and becauſe they are deſcribed by authors of undoubted credit, who had the beſt opportunities of receiving full information concerning them. The former is compoſed not only of pilgrims from every part of Egypt, but of thoſe which arrive from all the ſmall Mahomedan ſtates on the African coaſt of the Mediterranean, from the empire of Morocco, and even from the Negroe kingdoms on the Atlantic. When aſſembled, the caravan conſiſts at leaſt of fifty thouſand perſons, and the number of camels employed in carrying water, proviſions, and merchandize, is ſtill greater. The journey, which, in going from Cairo, and returning thither, is not completed in leſs than a hundred days, is performed wholly by land; and as the route lies moſtly through ſandy deſerts, or barren uninhabited wilds, which ſeldom afford any ſubſiſtence, and where often no ſources of water can be found, the pilgrims always undergo much fatigue, and ſometimes muſt endure incredible hardſhips. An early and good deſcription of this caravan is publiſhed by Hakluyt, vol. ii. p. 202, &c. Maillet has entered into a minute and curious detail with regard to it; Leſcript. de l'Egypte, part ii. p. 212, &c. Pocock has given a route, together with the length of each day's march, which he received from a perſon who had been fourteen times at Mecca, vol. i. p. 188. 261, &c.—The caravan from Damaſcus, compoſed of pilgrims from almoſt every province of the Turkiſh empire, is little inferior to the former in number, and the commerce which it carries on is hardly leſs valuable. Voyage de Volney, tom. ii. p. 251, &c. Ohſſon Tabl. Gener. de l'Empire Othom. III. p. 275, &c. This pilgrimage was performed in the year 1741, by Khojeh Abdulkurreem, whom I formerly mentioned, Note V. p. 296. He gives the uſual route from Damaſcus to Mecca, computed by hours, the common mode of reckoning a journey

journey in the Eaſt, through countries little frequented. According to the moſt moderate eſtimate, the diſtance between the two cities, by his account, muſt be above a thouſand miles; a great part of the journey is through a deſert, and the pilgrims not only endure much fatigue, but are often expoſed to great danger from the wild Arabs. Memoirs, p. 114, &c. It is a ſingular proof of the predatory ſpirit of the Arabs, that although all their independent tribes are zealous Mahomedans, yet they make no ſcruple of plundering the caravans of pilgrims, while engaged in performing one of the moſt indiſpenſable duties of their religion. A remarkable inſtance of this occurred in the year 1757. Travels through Cyprus, Syria, &c. by Abbé Mariti, vol. ii. p. 117, &c. Engl. Tranſlation. Great as theſe caravans are, we muſt not ſuppoſe that all the pilgrims who viſit Mecca belong to them; ſuch conſiderable additions are received from the extenſive dominions of Perſia, from every province of Indoſtan, and the countries to the Eaſt of it, from Abyſſinia, from various ſtates on the Southern coaſt of Africa, and from all parts of Arabia, that when the whole are aſſembled they have been computed to amount to two hundred thouſand. In ſome years the number is farther increaſed by ſmall bands of pilgrims from ſeveral interior provinces of Africa, the names and ſituations of which are juſt beginning to be known in Europe. For this laſt fact we are indebted to the Aſſociation for promoting the Diſcovery of the Interior Parts of Africa, formed by ſome Britiſh Gentlemen, upon principles ſo liberal, and with views ſo public-ſpirited, as do honour to themſelves and to their country. Proceedings, &c. p. 174.

In the Report of the Committee of the Privy Council on the Slave Trade, other particulars are contained; and it appears that the commerce carried on by caravans in the interior parts of Africa is not only widely extended, but

but of considerable value. Besides the great caravan which proceeds to Cairo, and is joined by Mahomedan pilgrims from every part of Africa, there are caravans which have no object but commerce, which set out from Fez, Algiers, Tunis, Tripoli, and other states on the sea coast, and penetrate far into the interior country. Some of them take no less than fifty days to reach the place of their destination; and, as the medium of their rate of travelling may be estimated at about eighteen miles a day, the extent of their journey may be easily computed. As both the time of their outset, and their route, are known, they are met by the people of all the countries through which they travel, who trade with them. Indian goods of every kind form a considerable article in this traffic, in exchange for which the chief commodity they can give is slaves. Part vi.

As the journeys of the caravans, which are purely commercial, do not commence at stated seasons, and their routes vary according to the convenience or fancy of the merchants of whom they are composed, a description cannot be given of them with the same degree of accuracy as of the great caravans which visit Mecca. But by attending to the accounts of some authors, and the occasional hints of others, sufficient information may be gathered to satisfy us, that the circulation of Eastern goods by these caravans is very extensive. The same intercourse which was anciently kept up by the provinces in the North-east of Asia with Indostan and China, and which I formerly described, still subsists. Among all the numerous tribes of Tartars, even of those which retain their pastoral manners in greatest purity, the demand for the productions of these two countries is very considerable. Voyages de Pallas, tom. i. p. 357. &c. tom. ii. p. 422. In order to supply them with these, caravans set out annually from Boghar, (Hackluyt, vol. i. p. 332.) Samarcand,

cand, Thibet, and ſeveral other places, and return with large cargoes of Indian and Chineſe goods. But the trade carried on between Ruſſia and China in this part of Aſia, is by far the moſt extenſive and beſt known. Some connection of this kind, it is probable, was kept up between them from the earlieſt period, but it increaſed greatly after the interior parts of Ruſſia were rendered more acceſſible by the conqueſts of Zingis Khan and Tamerlane. The commercial nations of Europe were ſo well acquainted with the mode of carrying on this trade, that ſoon after the Portugueſe had opened the communication with the Eaſt by the Cape of Good Hope, an attempt was made, in order to diminiſh the advantages which they derived from this diſcovery, to prevail on the Ruſſians to convey Indian and Chineſe commodities through the whole extent of their empire, partly by land-carriage and partly by means of navigable rivers, to ſome port on the Baltic, from which they might be diſtributed through every part of Europe. Ramuſio Raccolto da Viaggi, vol. i. p. 374. B. Hiſt. du Commerce de la Ruſſie, par M. Schreder, tom. i. p. 13, 14. This ſcheme too great for the monarch then on the throne of Ruſſia to carry into execution, was rendered practicable by the conqueſts of Ivan Baſilowitz, and the genius of Peter the Great. Though the capitals of the two empires were ſituated at the immenſe diſtance of ſix thouſand three hundred and ſeventy-eight miles from each other, and the route lay for above four hundred miles through an uninhabited deſert, (Bell's Travels, vol. ii. p. 167.) caravans travelled from the one to the other. But though it had been ſtipulated, when this intercourſe was eſtabliſhed, that the number of perſons in each caravan ſhould not exceed two hundred, and though they were ſhut up within the walls of a Caravanſerai during the ſhort time they were ſuffered to remain in Pekin, and were allowed to deal

only with a few merchants, to whom a monopoly of the trade with them had been granted; yet, notwithstanding all these restraints and precautions, the jealous vigilance with which the Chinese government excludes foreigners from a free intercourse with its subjects, was alarmed, and the admission of the Russian caravans into the empire was soon prohibited. After various negociations, an expedient was at length devised, by which the advantages of mutual commerce were secured, without infringing the cautious arrangements of Chinese policy. On the boundary of the two empires, two small towns were built almost contiguous, Kiachta inhabited by Russians, and Maimatschin by Chinese. To these all the marketable productions of their respective countries are brought by the subjects of each empire; and the furs, the linen and woollen cloth, the leather, the glass, &c. of Russia, are exchanged for the silk, the cotton, the tea, the rice, the toys, &c. of China. By some well-judged concessions of the sovereign now seated on the throne of Russia, whose enlarged mind is superior to the illiberal maxims of many of her predecessors, this trade is rendered so flourishing, that its amount annually is not less than eight hundred thousand pounds sterling, and it is the only trade which China carries on almost entirely by barter. Mr. Coxe, in his account of the Russian discoveries, has collected, with his usual attention and discernment, every thing relative to this branch of trade, the nature and extent of which were little known in Europe. Part ii. chap. ii. iii. iv. Nor is Kiachta the only place where Russia receives Chinese and Indian commodities. A considerable supply of both is brought by caravans of independent Tartars to Orenburg, on the river Jaik; Voyage de Pallas, tom. i. p. 355, &c. to Troitzkaia, on the river Oui, and to other places which I might mention. I have entered into this long detail concerning the mode

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in which the productions in India and China are circulated through Ruſſia, as it affords the moſt ſtriking inſtance, I know, of the great extent to which valuable commodities may be conveyed by land-carriage.

NOTE LV. Sect. IV. p. 166.

The only voyage of diſcovery in the Atlantic Ocean towards the South, by any of the ancient commercial ſtates in the Mediterranean, is that of Hanno, undertaken by order of the republic of Carthage. As the ſituation of that city, ſo much nearer the Straits than Tyre, Alexandria, and the other ſeats of ancient trade which have been mentioned, gave it more immediate acceſs to the ocean; that circumſtance, together with the various ſettlements which the Carthaginians had made in different provinces of Spain, naturally ſuggeſted to them this enterpriſe, and afforded them the proſpect of conſiderable advantages from its ſucceſs. The voyage of Hanno, inſtead of invalidating, ſeems to confirm the juſtneſs of the reaſons which have been given, why no ſimilar attempt was made by the other commercial ſtates in the Mediterranean.

NOTE LVI. Sect. IV. p. 168.

Though the intelligent authors whom I have quoted onſidered this voyage of the Phenicians as fabulous, Herotus mentions a circumſtance concerning it which ſeems o prove that it had really been performed. "The Phenicians," ſays he, "affirmed that, in ſailing round Africa, they had the ſun on their right hand, which to me appears not to be credible, though it may be deemed ſo by others." Lib. iv. c. 42. This, it is

 certain,

certain, muſt have happened, if they really accompliſhed ſuch a voyage. The ſcience of aſtronomy, however, was in that early period ſo imperfect, that it was by experience only that the Phenicians could come at the knowledge of this fact; they durſt not, without this, have ventured to aſſert what would have appeared to be an improbable fiction. Even after what they related, Herodotus diſbelieved it.

NOTE LVII. Sect. IV. p. 176.

Notwithstanding this increaſing demand for the productions of India, it is remarkable, that during the ſixteenth century ſome commodities which are now the chief articles of importation from the Eaſt, were either altogether unknown, or of little account. Tea, the importation of which, at preſent, far exceeds that of any other production of the Eaſt, has not been in general uſe in any country of Europe, a full century; and yet, during that ſhort period, from ſome ſingular caprice of taſte, or power of faſhion, the infuſion of a leaf brought from the fartheſt extremity of the earth, of which it is perhaps the higheſt praiſe to ſay that it is innoxious, has become almoſt a neceſſary of life, in ſeveral parts of Europe, and the paſſion for it deſcends from the moſt elevated to the loweſt orders in ſociety. In 1785 it was computed that the whole quantity of tea imported into Europe from China was about nineteen millions of pounds, of which it is conjectured that twelve millions were conſumed in Great Britain and the dominions depending upon it. Dodſley's Annual Regiſter for 1784 and 1785, p. 156. In 1789 twenty-one millions of pounds were imported. The porcelain of China, now as common in many parts of Europe as if it were of domeſtic manufacture, was not known to the ancients. Marco Polo is the firſt among

among the moderns who mentions it. The Portuguese began to import it not long after their first voyage to China, A. D. 1517; but it was a considerable time before the use of it became extensive.

NOTE LVIII. Sect. III. p. 200.

According to all the writers of antiquity, the Indians are said to be divided into seven tribes or casts. Strabo, lib. xv. p. 1029. C. &c. Diod. Sicul. lib. ii. p. 153, &c. Arrian. Indic. c. 10: They were led into this error, it is probable, by considering some of the subdivisions of the casts, as if they had been a distinct independent order. But that they were no more than four original casts, we learn from the concurring testimony of the best-informed modern travellers. A most distinct account of these we have in "La Porte "Ouverte, ou la vraye Representation de la Vie, des "Mœurs, de la Religion, et du Service, des Brahmines, "qui demeurent sur les Costes de Choromandel," &c. This was compiled before the middle of last century, by Abraham Roger, chaplain of the Dutch factory at Pullicate. By gaining the confidence of an intelligent Brahmin, he acquired information concerning the manners and religion of the Indians, more authentic and extensive than was known to Europeans prior to the late translations from the Sanskreet language. I mention this book, because it seems to be less known than it deserves to be. There remains now no doubt with respect either to the number or the functions of the casts, as both are ascertained from the most ancient and sacred books of the Hindoos, and confirmed by the accounts of their own institutions, given by Brahmins eminent for their learning. According to them, the different

of human nature. No perſon of any caſt will have the leaſt communication with them. Sonnerat, tom. i. p. 55, 56. If a Pariar approach a *Nayr*, *i. e.* a warrior of high caſt, on the Malabar coaſt, he may put him to death with impunity. Water or milk are conſidered as defiled even by their ſhadow paſſing over them, and cannot be uſed until they are purified. Ayeen Akbery, vol. iii. p. 243. It is almoſt impoſſible for words to expreſs the ſenſation of vileneſs that the name of Pariar or Chandala conveys to the mind of a Hindoo. Every Hindoo who violates the rules or inſtitutions of his caſt ſinks into his degraded ſituation. This it is which renders Hindoos ſo reſolute in adhering to the inſtitutions of their tribe, becauſe the loſs of caſt is, to them, the loſs of all human comfort and reſpectability; and is a puniſhment, beyond compariſon, more ſevere than excommunication in the moſt triumphant period of papal power.

The four original caſts are named, and their functions deſcribed in the Mahabarat, the moſt ancient book of the Hindoos, and of higher authority than any with which Europeans are hitherto acquainted. Baghvat-Geeta, p. 130. The ſame diſtinction of caſts was known to the author of Heeto-pades, another work of conſiderable antiquity, tranſlated from the Sanſkreet, p. 251.

The mention of one circumſtance reſpecting the diſtinction of caſts has been omitted in the text. Though the line of ſeparation be ſo drawn, as to render the aſcent from an inferior to a higher caſt abſolutely impoſſible, and it would be regarded as a moſt enormous impiety, if one in a lower order ſhould preſume to perform any function belonging to thoſe of a ſuperior caſt; yet in certain caſes, the Pundits declare it to be lawful for perſons of a high claſs to exerciſe ſome of

the occupations allotted to a claſs below their own, without loſing their caſt by doing ſo. Pref. of Pundits to the code of Gentoo laws, p. 100. Accordingly we find Brahmins employed in the ſervice of their Princes, not only as miniſters of ſtate, Orme's Fragments, p. 207. but in ſubordinate ſtations. Moſt of the officers of high rank in the army of Sevagi, the founder of the Mahratta ſtate, were Brahmins, and ſome of them Pundits or learned Brahmins. Ibid. p. 97. Hurry Punt and Purſeram Bhow, who commanded the Mahratta forces, which acted in conjunction with the army of Lord Cornwallis againſt Tippoo Saib, were Brahmins. Many ſeapoys in the ſervice of the Eaſt India Company, particularly in the Bengal preſidency, are of the Brahmin caſt.

Another fact concerning the caſts deſerves notice. An immenſe number of pilgrims, amounting in ſome years to more than 150,000, viſit the Pagoda of Jaggernaut in Oriſſa, (one of the moſt ancient and moſt revered places of Hindoo worſhip,) at the time of the annual feſtival in honour of the deity to whom the temple is conſecrated. The members of all the four caſts are allowed promiſcuouſly to approach the altar of the idol, and ſeating themſelves without diſtinction eat indiſcriminate of the ſame food. This ſeems to indicate ſome remembrance of a ſtate prior to the inſtititutions of caſts when all men were conſidered as equal. I have not ſuch information as enables me to account for a practice ſo repugnant to the firſt ideas and principles of the Hindoos, either ſacred or civil. Bernier, tom. ii. p. 102. Tavernier, book ii. c. 9. Anquetil. Diſc. Prelim. p. 81. Sketches, p. 96.

Some of my readers muſt have obſerved, that I have not mentioned the numerous orders of Indian devotees, to

Hist. Indic. c. 16., was a muslin cloth thrown loosely about their shoulders, a muslin shirt reaching to the middle of the leg, and their beards were dyed various colours; which is not the same with that used at present. The custom of secluding women, and the strictness with which they are confined, is likewise supposed to have been introduced by the Mahomedans. This supposition is in some measure confirmed by the drama of Sancontala, translated from the Sanskreet. In that play several female characters are introduced, who mingle in society, and converse as freely with men, as women are accustomed to do in Europe. The author, we may presume, describes the manners, and adheres to the customs of his own age. But while I mention this remark, it is proper, likewise, to observe, that, from a passage in Strabo, there is reason to think, that in the age of Alexander the Great, women in India were guarded with the same jealous attention as at present. "When their Princes," (says he, copying Megasthenes,) "set out upon a public "hunt, they are accompanied by a number of their wo-"men, but along the road in which they travel, ropes "are stretched on each side, and if any man approach "near to them, he is instantly put to death." Lib. xv. p. 1037. A. In some parts of India, where the original manners of the people may be supposed to subsist in greatest purity, particularly in the high country towards the sources of the Indus, women of rank reside in private apartments, secluded from society. Forster's Travels, vol. i. p. 228. Women even of the Brahmin cast appear in the streets without a veil; and it is only, as I am informed, in the houses of persons of high rank or great opulence that a distinct quarter or haram is allotted to the women. The influence of European manners begins to be apparent among the Hindoos who reside in the town of Calcutta. Some of them drive about in English chariots, sit upon chairs, and furnish

niſh their houſes with mirrors. Many circumſtances might be mentioned, were this the proper place, which, it is probable, will contribute to the progreſs of this ſpirit of imitation.

NOTE LX. p. 203.

It is amuſing to obſerve how exactly the ideas of an intelligent Aſiatic coincide with thoſe of the Europeans on this ſubject. "In reflecting, ſays he, upon the poverty of Turan [the countries beyond the Oxus] and Arabia, I was at firſt at a loſs to aſſign a reaſon why theſe countries have never been able to retain wealth, whilſt, on the contrary, it is daily increaſing in Indoſtan. Timour carried into Turan the riches of Turkey, Perſia, and Indoſtan, but they are all diſſipated; and, during the reigns of the four firſt Caliphs, Turkey, Perſia, part of Arabia, Ethiopia, Egypt, and Spain, were their tributaries; but ſtill they were not rich. It is evident, then, that this diſſipation of the riches of a ſtate, muſt have happened either from extraordinary drains, or from ſome defect in the government. Indoſtan has been frequently plundered by foreign invaders, and not one of its Kings ever gained for it any acquiſition of wealth; neither has the country many mines of gold and ſilver, and yet Indoſtan abounds in money and every other kind of wealth. The abundance of ſpecie is undoubtedly owing to the large importation of gold and ſilver in the ſhips of Europe, and other nations, many of whom bring ready money in exchange for the manufactures and natural productions of the country. If this is not the cauſe of the proſperous ſtate of Indoſtan, it muſt

"be

"be owing to the peculiar bleſſing of God." Memoirs of Kojeh Abdul-kureem, a Caſhmeerian of diſtinction, p. 42.

NOTE LXI. p. 209.

THAT the monarchs of India were the ſole proprietors of land, is aſſerted in moſt explicit terms by the ancients. The people, (ſay they,) pay a land-tax to their Kings, becauſe the whole kingdom is regal property. Strabo, lib. xv. p. 1030. A. Diod. Sicul. lib. ii. p. 153. This was not peculiar to India. In all the great monarchies of the Eaſt, the ſole property of land ſeems to be veſted in the ſovereign as lord paramount. According to Chardin, this is the ſtate of property in Perſia, and lands were let by the monarch to the farmers who cultivated them, on conditions nearly reſembling thoſe granted to the Indian Ryots. Voyages, tom. iii. p. 339, &c. 4to. M. Volney gives a ſimilar account of the tenure by which lands are held in one of the great provinces of the Turkiſh empire. Voy. en Syrie, &c. tom. ii. p. 369, &c. The preciſe mode, however, in which the Ryots of Indoſtan held their poſſeſſions, is a circumſtance in its ancient political conſtitution, with reſpect to which gentlemen of ſuperior diſcernment, who have reſided long in the country, and filled ſome of the higheſt ſtations in government, have formed very different opinions. Some have imagined that grants of land were made by the ſovereign to villages or ſmall communities, the inhabitants of which, under the direction of their own chiefs or heads-men, laboured it in common, and divided the produce of it among them in certain proportions. Deſcript. de l'Ind. par M. Bernoulli, tom. ii. 223, &c. Others maintain, that the property

perty of land has been transferred from the crown to hereditary officers of great eminence and power, denominated *Zemindars*, who collect the rents from the Ryots, and parcel out the lands among them. Others contend, that the office of the Zemindars is temporary and ministerial, that they are merely collectors of revenue, removeable at pleasure, and the tenure by which the Ryots hold their possessions is derived immediately from the sovereign. This last opinion is supported with great ability by Mr. Grant, in an Inquiry into the Nature of Zemindary tenures in the landed property of Bengal, &c. This question still continues to be agitated in Bengal, and such plausible arguments have been produced in support of the different opinions, that although it be a point extremely interesting, as the future system of British finance in India appears likely to hinge, in an essential degree, upon it, persons well acquainted with the state of India, have not been able to form a final and satisfactory opinion on this subject. Captain Kirkpatrick's Introd. to the Institutes of Ghazan Khan, New Asiatic Miscel. N° II. p. 130. Though the sentiments of the Committee of Revenue, composed of persons eminent for their abilities, lean to a conclusion against the hereditary right of the Zemindars in the soil, yet the Supreme Council, in the year 1786, declined, for good reasons, to give any decisive judgment on a subject of such magnitude.—This note was sent to the press before I had it in my power to peruse Mr. Rouse's ingenious and instructive dissertation concerning the landed property of Bengal. In it he adopts an opinion contrary to that of Mr. Grant, and maintains, with that candour and liberality of sentiment which are always conspicuous where there is no other object in view but the discovery of truth, that the Zemindars of Bengal possess their landed property by hereditary right. Were I possessed of such knowledge either of the state of India, or

of

of the ſyſtem of adminiſtration eſtabliſhed there, as would be requiſite for comparing theſe different theories, and determining which of them merits the preference, the ſubject of my reſearches does not render it neceſſary to enter into ſuch a diſquiſition. I imagine, however, that the ſtate of landed property in India might be greatly illuſtrated by an accurate compariſon of it with the nature of feudal tenures; and I apprehend that there might be traced there a ſucceſſion of changes taking place in much the ſame order as has been obſerved in Europe, from which it might appear, that the poſſeſſion of land was granted at firſt during pleaſure, afterwards for life, and at length became perpetual and hereditary property. But even under this laſt form, when land is acquired either by purchaſe or inheritance, the manner in which the right of property is confirmed and rendered complete, in Europe by a Charter, in India by a *Sunnud* from the ſovereign, ſeems to point out what was its original ſtate. According to each of the theories which I have mentioned, the tenure and condition of the Ryots nearly reſemble the deſcription which I have given of them. Their ſtate, we learn from the accounts of intelligent obſervers, is as happy and independent as falls to the lot of any race of men employed in the cultivation of the earth. The antient Greek and Roman writers, whoſe acquaintance with the interior parts of India was very imperfect, repreſent the fourth part of the annual produce of land as the general average of rent paid to the ſovereign. Upon the authority of a popular author who flouriſhed in India prior to the Chriſtian æra, we may conclude that the ſixth part of the people's income was, in his time, the uſual portion of the ſovereign. Sacontala, Act V. p. 53. It is now known that what the ſovereign receives from land varies greatly in different parts of the country, and is regulated by the fertility or barrenneſs of

of the ſoil, the nature of the climate, the abundance or ſcarcity of water, and many other obvious circumſtances. By the account given of it, I ſhould imagine that, in ſome diſtricts, it has been raiſed beyond its due proportion. One circumſtance with reſpect to the adminiſtration of revenue in Bengal merits notice, as it redounds to the honour of the Emperor Akber, the wiſdom of whoſe government I have often had occaſion to celebrate. A general and regular aſſeſſment of revenue in Bengal was formed in his reign. All the lands were then valued, and the rent of each inhabitant and of each village aſcertained. A regular gradation of accounts was eſtabliſhed. The rents of the different inhabitants who lived in one neighbourhood being collected together, formed the account of a village; the rents of ſeveral villages being next collected into one view, formed the accounts of a larger portion of land. The aggregate of theſe accounts exhibited the rent of a diſtrict, and the ſum total of the rents of all the diſtricts in Bengal, formed the account of the revenue of the whole province. From the reign of Akber to the government of Jaffeer Ali Cawn, A. D. 1757, the annual amount of revenue, and the modes of levying it, continued with little variation. But in order to raiſe the ſum which he had ſtipulated to pay the Engliſh on his elevation, he departed from the wiſe arrangements of Akber; many new modes of aſſeſſment were introduced, and exactions multiplied.

NOTE LXII. p. 211.

I SHALL mention only one inſtance of their attention to this uſeful regulation of police. Lahore, in the Panjab, is diſtant from Agra, the ancient capital of Indoſtan,

doſtan, five hundred miles. Along each ſide of the road between theſe two great cities, there is planted a continued row of ſhady trees, forming an avenue, to which (whether we conſider its extent, its beauty, or utility in a hot climate) there is nothing ſimilar in any country. Rennell's Memoir, p. 69.

NOTE LXIII. p. 215.

We cannot place the equitable and mild government of Akber in a point of view more advantageous, than by contraſting it with the conduct of other Mahomedan princes. In no country did this contraſt ever appear more ſtriking than in India. In the thouſandth year of the Chriſtian æra, Mahmud of Ghazna, to whoſe dominion were ſubjected the ſame countries which formed the ancient kingdom of Bactria, invaded Indoſtan. Every ſtep of his progreſs in it was marked with blood and deſolation. The moſt celebrated Pagodas, the ancient monuments of Hindoo devotion and magnificence, were deſtroyed, the miniſters of religion were maſſacred, and with undiſtinguiſhing ferocity the country was laid waſte, and the cities were plundered and burnt. About four hundred years after, Mahmud, Timur, or Tamerlane, a conqueror of higher fame, turned his irreſiſtible arms againſt Indoſtan; and though born in an age more improved, he not only equalled, but often ſo far ſurpaſſed the cruel deeds of Mahmud, as to be juſtly branded with the odious name of the "Deſtroy-"ing Prince," which was given to him by the Hindoos, the undeſerving victims of his rage. A rapid but ſtriking deſcription of their devaſtations may be found in Mr. Orme's Diſſertation on the Eſtabliſhments made by the Mahomedan conquerors in Indoſtan. A more

more full account of them is given by Mr. Gibbon, vol. v. p. 646. vol. vi. p. 339, &c. The arrogant contempt with which bigotted Mahomedans view all the nations who have not embraced the religion of the prophet will account for the unrelenting rigour of Mahmud and Timur towards the Hindoos, and greatly enhances the merit of the tolerant spirit and moderation with which Akber governed his subjects. What impression the mild administration of Akber made upon the Hindoos, we learn from a beautiful letter of Jesswant Sing, Rajah of Joudpore, to Aurengzebe, his fanatical and persecuting successor. "Your royal ancestor, Akber, whose throne is now in heaven, conducted the affairs of this empire in equity and firm security for the space of fifty-two years, preserving every tribe of men in ease and happiness; whether they were followers of Jesus, or of Moses, of David, or of Mahomed; were they Brahmins, were they of the sect of Dharians, which denies the eternity of matter, or of that which ascribes the existence of the world to chance, they all equally enjoyed his countenance and favour; insomuch that his people, in gratitude for the indiscriminate protection which he afforded them, distinguished him by the appellation of *Juggot Grow*, Guardian of Mankind.——If Your Majesty places any faith in those books, by distinction called divine, you will there be instructed that God is the God of all mankind, not the God of Mahomedans alone. The Pagan and the Mussulman are equally in his presence. Distinctions of colours are of his ordination. It is he who gives existence. In your temples, to his Name, the voice is raised in prayer; in a house of images, where the bell is shaken, still He is the object of adoration. To vilify the religion and customs of other men, is to set at naught the pleasure of the Almighty. When we de-

" face a picture, we naturally incur the resentment of " the painter; and justly has the poet said, " Presume " not to arraign or to scrutinize the various works of " Power Divine." For this valuable communication we are indebted to Mr. Orme. Fragments, notes, p. xcvii. I have been assured by a gentleman who has read this letter in the original, that the translation is not only faithful but elegant.

NOTE LXIV. p. 225.

I HAVE not attempted a description of any subterraneous excavations but those of Elephanta, because none of them have been so often visited, or so carefully inspected. In several parts of India, there are, however, stupendous works of a similar nature. The extent and magnificence of the excavations in the Island of Salsetta are such, that the artist employed by Governor Boon to make drawings of them, asserted that it would require the labour of forty thousand men for forty years to finish them. Archæologia, vol. vii. p. 336. Loose as this mode of estimation may be, it conveys an idea of the impression which the view of them made upon his mind. The Pagodas of Ellore, eighteen miles from Aurungabad, are likewise hewn out of the solid rock, and if they do not equal those of Elephanta and Salsetta in magnitude, they surpass them far in their extent and number. M. Thevenot, who first gave any description of these singular mansions, asserts, that for above two leagues all around the mountain nothing is to be seen but Pagodas. Voy. part iii. chap. 44. They were examined at greater leisure and with more attention by M. Anquetil du Perron; but as his long description of them is not accompanied with any plan or drawing, I cannot convey a distinct

idea of the whole. It is evident, however, that they are the works of a powerful people, and among the innumerable figures in ſculpture with which the walls are covered, all the preſent objects of Hindoo worſhip may be diſtinguiſhed. Zend-aveſta. Diſc. Prelim. p. 233. There are remarkable excavations in a mountain at Mavalipuram near Sadras. This mountain is well known on the Coromandel coaſt by the name of the *Seven Pagodas*. A good deſcription of the works there which are magnificent and of high antiquity is given. Aſiat. Reſearches, vol. i. p. 145, &c. Many other inſtances of ſimilar works might be produced if it were neceſſary. What I have aſſerted, p. 225. concerning the elegance of ſome of the ornaments in Indian buildings, is confirmed by Colonel Call, chief engineer at Madras, who urges this as a proof of the early and high civilization of the Indians. "It "may ſafely be pronounced," ſays he, "that no part "of the world has more marks of antiquity for arts, "ſciences, and civilization, than the peniniſula of India, "from the Ganges to Cape Comorin. I think the "carvings on ſome of the Pagodas and Choultries, as "well as the grandeur of the work, exceeds any thing "executed now-a-days, not only for the delicacy of the "chiſel, but the expence or conſtruction, conſidering, in "many inſtances, to what diſtances the component parts "were carried, and to what heights raiſed." Philoſophical Tranſactions, vol lxii. p. 354. I am happy to find my idea, that the firſt temples erected by the Hindoos were formed upon the model of thoſe caverns in which the rites of religion were originally celebrated, confirmed and more fully unfolded by Mr. Hodges. In a ſhort diſſertation on the primitive ſtandard, or prototype of the different ſtyles of architecture, viz. the Egyptian, Hindoo, Mooriſh, Gothic, and Chineſe, he has examined and illuſtrated that curious ſubject with great ingenuity. Travels in India, p. 63—77.

NOTE LXV. p. 229.

India, ſays Strabo, produces a variety of ſubſtances which dye the moſt admirable colours. That the *Indicum* which produced the beautiful blue colour, is the ſame with the *Indigo* of the moderns, we may conclude not only from the reſemblance of the name, and the ſimilarity of the effects, but from the deſcription given by Pliny in the paſſage which I have quoted in the text. He knew that it was a preparation of a vegetable ſubſtance, though he was ill-informed both concerning the plant itſelf, and the proceſs by which it was fitted for uſe; which will not appear ſurpriſing, when we recollect the account formerly given of the ſtrange ignorance of the ancients with reſpect to the origin and preparation of ſilk. From the colour of Indigo, in the form in which it was imported, it is denominated by ſome authors, *Atramentum Indicum*, and *Indicum Nigrum*, Salmaſ. Exercit. p. 180, and is mentioned under the laſt of theſe names, among the articles of importation from India. Peripl. Mar. Erythr. p. 22. The colour of the modern Indigo, when undiluted, reſembles that of the ancient Indicum, being ſo intenſely coloured as to appear black. Delaval's Experim. Inquiry into the Cauſe of the Changes of Colours, Pref. p. xxiii. Indigo is the principal dye-ſtuff uſed by the natives of Sumatra, and is much cultivated in that iſland; but the mode of preparing it differs from that which is common among the people of Indoſtan. Marſden. Hiſt. of Sumatra, p. 77. There has been lately found in the Circar of Rajamundry a new ſpecies of Indigo, denominated the *Tree Indigo*, which, as it grows wild and in great abundance, promiſes to be a diſcovery of conſiderable uſe. Oriental Repertory, No. I. p. 39, &c. The *Gum Lacca*, uſed in dying a red colour, was likewiſe

known to the ancients, and by the ſame name which it now bears. Salamaſ. Exercit. p. 810. This valuable ſubſtance, of ſuch extenſive utility in painting, dying, japanning, varniſhing, and in the manufacture of ſealing-wax, is the production of a very minute inſect. Theſe inſects fix themſelves upon the ſucculent extremities of the branches of certain trees, and are ſoon glued to the place on which they ſettle, by a thick pellucid liquid which exudes from their bodies, the gradual accumulation of which forms a complete cell for each inſect, which is the tomb of the parent, and the birth-place of its offſpring. This glutinous ſubſtance, with which the branches of trees are entirely covered, is the Gum-lacca. An account of its formation, nature, and uſe, is given in the Philoſ. Tranſ. vol. lxxi. part ii. p. 374. in a conciſe, accurate, and ſatisfactory manner. Some curious obſervations upon this inſect are publiſhed by Mr. Roxburgh, who cultivates the ſtudy of Natural Hiſtory in India with great aſſiduity and ſucceſs. Aſiatic Reſearches, vol. ii. p. 361. It is remarkable that Cteſias ſeems to have received an account tolerably diſtinct of the inſect by which the Guma-lacca is produced, and celebrates the beauty of the colour which it dyes. Excerpta ex Indic. ad calc. Herodot. edit. Weſſeling, p. 830. *Indian Dyers* was the ancient name of thoſe who dyed either the fine blue or the fine red, which points out the country whence the materials they uſed were brought. Salmaſ. ib. p. 810. From their dying cotton ſtuffs with different colours, it is evident that the ancient Indians muſt have made ſome conſiderable proficiency in chemical knowledge. Pliny, lib. xxxv. c. ii. § 42. gives an account of this art as far as it was known anciently. It is preciſely the ſame with that now practiſed in callico-printing.

NOTE LXVI. p. 240.

As Sanſkreet literature is altogether a new acquiſition to Europe, Baghvat-Geeta, the firſt tranſlation from that language having been publiſhed ſo late as A. D. 1785, it is intimately connected with the ſubject of my inquiries, and may afford entertainment to ſome of my readers, after having reviewed in the text, with a greater degree of critical attention, the two Sanſkreet works moſt worthy of notice, to give here a ſuccinct account of other compoſitions in that tongue with which we have been made acquainted. The extenſive uſe of the Sanſkreet language is a circumſtance which merits particular attention. "The "grand ſource of Indian literature," (ſays Mr. Halhed, the firſt Engliſhman who acquired the knowledge of Sanſkreet,) "the parent of almoſt every dialect from the "Perſian gulf to the China ſeas, is the Sanſkreet, a lan-"guage of the moſt venerable and unfathomable anti-"quity; which, although at preſent, ſhut up in the "libraries of Brahmins, and appropriated ſolely to the "records of their religion, appears to have been current "over moſt of the Oriental world; and traces of its ori-"ginal extent may ſtill be diſcovered in almoſt every diſ-"trict of Aſia. I have been often aſtoniſhed to find the "ſimilitude of Sanſkreet words with thoſe of Perſian "and Arabic, and even of Latin and Greek; and "thoſe not in technical and metaphorical terms, which the "mutuation of refined arts and improved manners might "have occaſionally introduced, but in the ground-work "of language, in monoſyllables, in the names of numbers, "and the appellations of ſuch things as would be firſt "diſcriminated on the immediate dawn of civilization. "The reſemblance which may be obſerved in the charac-"ters on the medals and ſignets of various diſtricts of

"Aſia,

"Afia, the light which they reciprocally reflect upon "each other, and the general analogy which they all bear "to the fame grand prototype, afford another ample "field for curiofity. The coins of Affam, Napaul, Cafh-"meere, and many other kingdoms, are all ftamped with "Sanfkreet characters, and moftly contain allufions to "the old Sanfkreet mythology. The fame conformity "I have obferved on the impreffion of feals from Bootan "and Thibet. A collateral inference may likewife be "deduced from the peculiar arrangement of the San-"fkreet alphabet, fo very different from that of any "other quarter of the world. This extraordinary mode "of combination ftill exifts in the greateft part of the "Eaft, from the Indus to Pegu, in dialects now appa-"rently unconnected, and in characters completely dif-"fimilar; and it is a forcible argument that they are "all derived from the fame fource. Another channel "of fpeculation prefents itfelf in the names of perfons "and places, of titles and dignities, which are open to "general notice, and in which, to the fartheft limits of "Afia, may be found manifeft traces of the Sanfkreet." Preface to the Grammar of the Bengal Language, p. 3. After this curious account of the Sanfkreet tongue, I proceed to enumerate the works which have been tranflated from it, befides the two mentioned in the text.—1. To Mr. Wilkins we are indebted for *Heeto-pades* or *Amicable Inftruction*, in a feries of connected fables, interfperfed with moral, prudential, and political maxims. This work is in fuch high efteem throughout the Eaft, that it has been tranflated into every language fpoken there. It did not efcape the notice of the emperor Akber, attentive to every thing that could contribute to promote ufeful knowledge. He directed his Vizier, Abul Fazel, to put it into a ftyle fuited to all capacities, and to illuftrate the obfcure paffages in it, which he accordingly did, and gave it the title of, *The Criterion of Wifdom*. At length,

thefe fables made their way into Europe, and have been circulated there with additions and alterations, under the names of Pilpay and Efop. Many of the Sanfkreet apologues are ingenious and beautiful, and have been copied or imitated by the fabulifts of other nations. But in fome of them the characters of the animals introduced are very ill fuftained; to defcribe a tyger as extremely devout, and practifing charity, and other religious duties, p. 16. or an old moufe well read in the *Neetee Saftras*, i. e. Syftems of morality and policy, p. 24: a cat reading religous books, p. 35, &c. difcovers a want of tafte, and an inattention to propriety. Many of the moral fayings, if confidered as detached maxims, are founded upon a thorough knowledge of life and manners, and convey inftruction with elegant fimplicity. But the attempt of the author to form his work into a connected feries of fables, and his mode of interweaving with them fuch a number of moral reflections in profe and in verfe, renders the ftructure of the whole fo artificial that the perufal of it becomes often unpleafant. Akber was fo fenfible of this, that, among other inftructions, he advifes his Vizier to abridge the long digreffions in that work. By thefe ftrictures it is far from my intention to detract in the fmalleft degree from the merit of Mr. Wilkins. His country is much indebted to him for having opened a new fource of fcience and tafte. The celebrity of the Heetoo-pades, as well as its intrinfic merit, notwithftanding the defects which I have mentioned, juftify his choice of it, as a work worthy of being made known to Europe in its original form. From reading this and his other tranflations, no man will refufe him the praife, to which he modeftly confines his pretenfions "of having "drawn a picture which we fuppofe to be a true like-"nefs, although we are unacquainted with the original." Pref. p. xiv. — 2. In the firft Number of the New Afiatic Mifcellany, we have a tranflation of a celebrated compofi-

tion

tion in the Eaſt, known by the title of the *Five Gems*. It conſiſts of ſtanzas by five poets who attended the court of Abiſſura, King of Bengal. Some of theſe ſtanzas are ſimple and elegant.—3. An ode tranſlated from Wulli; in which that extravagance of fancy, and thoſe far fetched and unnatural conceits, which ſo often diſguſt Europeans with the poetical compoſitions of the Eaſt, abound too much. The editor has not informed us to whoſe knowledge of the Sanſkreet we are indebted for theſe two tranſlations. —4. Some original grants of land, of very ancient dates, tranſlated by Mr. Wilkins. It may ſeem odd, that a charter or legal conveyance of property ſhould be ranked among the literary compoſitions of any people. But ſo widely do the manners of the Hindoos differ from thoſe of Europe, that as our lawyers multiply words and clauſes, in order to render a grant complete, and to guard againſt every thing that may invalidate it, the *Pundits* ſeem to diſpatch the legal part of the deed with brevity, but, in a long preamble and concluſion, make an extraordinary diſplay of their own learning, eloquence, and powers of compoſition, both in proſe and verſe. The preamble to one of theſe deeds is an encomium of the monarch who grants the land, in a bold ſtrain of Eaſtern exaggeration: "When his innumerable army marched, "the heavens were ſo filled with the duſt of their feet "that the birds of the air could reſt upon it." — "His "elephants moved like walking mountains, and the earth "oppreſſed by their weight mouldered into duſt." It concludes with denouncing vengeance againſt thoſe who ſhould venture to infringe this grant: "Riches and "the life of man are as tranſient as drops of water upon "the leaf of the lotus. Learning this truth, O man! "do not attempt to deprive another of his property." Aſiatic Reſearches, vol. i. p. 123, &c. The other grant which appears to be ſtill more ancient, is not leſs remarkable. Both were found engraved on plates of copper.

per. Ib. p. 357, &c. — 5. The tranſlation of part of the Shaſter, publiſhed by Colonel Dow, in the year 1768, ought perhaps to have been firſt mentioned. But as this tranſlation was not made by him from the Sanſkreet, but taken from the mouth of a Brahmin, who explained the Shaſter in Perſian, or in the vulgar language of Bengal, it will fall more properly under notice when we come to inquire into the ſtate of ſcience among the Hindoos, than in this place, where we are endeavouring to give ſome idea of their taſte and compoſition.

NOTE LXVII. p. 249.

As many of my readers may be unacquainted with the extravagant length of the four æras or periods of Indian chronology, it may be proper to give an account of them from Mr. Halhed's Preface to the Code of Gentoo Laws, p. xxxvi.

1. The *Suttee Jogue* (or age of purity) is ſaid to have laſted three million two hundred thouſand years; and they hold that the life of man was extended in that age to one hundred thouſand years; and that his ſtature was twenty-one cubits.

2. The *Tirtah Jogue* (in which one third of mankind was corrupted) they ſuppoſe to have conſiſted of two million four hundred thouſand years, and that men lived to the age of ten thouſand years.

3. The *Dwapaar Jogue* (in which half of the human race became depraved) endured one million ſix hundred thouſand years; and the life of man was then reduced to a thouſand years.

4. The

4. The *Collee Jogue* (in which all mankind are corrupted, or rather leſſened, for that is the true meaning of *Collee*) is the preſent æra, which they ſuppoſe ordained to ſubſiſt four hundred thouſand years, of which near five thouſand are already paſt; and the life of man in that period is limited to one hundred years.

If we ſuppoſe the computation of time in the Indian chronology to be made by ſolar or even by lunar years nothing can be more extravagant in itſelf, or more repugnant to our mode of calculating the duration of the world, founded on ſacred and infallible authority. Some attempts have been made by learned men, particularly by M. Bailly, in a very ingenious diſſertation on that ſubject, to bring the chronology of the Hindoos to accord ſomewhat better with that of the Old Teſtament; but as I could not explain the principles upon which he founds his concluſions, without entering into long and intricate diſcuſſions foreign from the ſubject of this Diſſertation, and as I cannot aſſent to ſome of his opinions, I ſhall reſt ſatisfied with referring to his Aſtron. Indienne, Diſc. Prelim. p. lxxvii. and leave my readers to judge for themſelves. I am happy to obſerve that a memoir on the Chronology of the Hindoos will be publiſhed in the Second Volume of the Tranſactions of the Society of Bengal, and I hope that ſome learned member of that body will be able, from his acquaintance with the languages and hiſtory of the country, to throw light upon a ſubject which its connection with religion and ſcience renders extremely intereſting. From one circumſtance, however, which merits attention, we may conclude, that the information which we have hitherto received concerning the chronology of the Hindoos is very incorrect. We have, as far as I know, only five original accounts of the different Jogues or æras of the Hindoos. The firſt is given by M. Roger, who received

received it from the Brahmins on the Coromandel coaſt. According to it, the Suttee Jogue is a period of one million ſeven hundred and twenty-eight thouſand years; the Tirtah Jogue is one million two hundred and ninety-ſix thouſand years; the Dwapaar Jogue is eight hundred and ſixty-four thouſand years. The duration of the Collee Jogue he does not ſpecify. Porte Ouverte, p. 179. The next is that of M. Bernier, who received it from the Brahmins of Benares. According to him, the duration of the Suttee Jogue was two million five hundred thouſand years; that of Tirtah Jogue one million two hundred thouſand years; that of the Dwapaar Jogue is eight hundred and ſixty-four thouſand years. Concerning the period of the Collee Jogue, he, likewiſe, is ſilent. Voyages, tom. ii. p. 160. The third is that of Colonel Dow, according to which the Suttee Jogue is a period of fourteen million of years; the Tirtah Jogue one million eighty thouſand; the Dwapaar Jogue ſeventy-two thouſand; and the Collee Jogue thirty-ſix thouſand years. Hiſt. of Hindoſt. vol. i. p. 2. The fourth account is that of M. de Gentil, who received it from the Brahmins of the Coromandel coaſt, and as his information was acquired in the ſame part of India, and derived from the ſame ſource with that of M. Roger, it agrees with his in every particular. Mem. de l'Academ. des Sciences pour 2772, tom. ii. part. i. p. 176. The fifth is the account of Mr. Halhed, which I have already given. From this diſcrepancy, not only of the total numbers, but of many of the articles in the different accounts, it is manifeſt that our information concerning Indian chronology is hitherto as uncertain as the whole ſyſtem of it is wild and fabulous. To me it appears highly probable, That when we underſtand more thoroughly the principles upon which the factitious æras or Jogues of the Hindoos have been formed, that we may be more able to reconcile their chronology

logy to the true mode of computing time, founded on the authority of the Old Teſtament; and may likewiſe find reaſon to conclude, that the account given by their aſtronomers of the ſituation of the heavenly bodies at the beginning of the Collee Jogue, is not eſtabliſhed by actual obſervation, but the reſult of a retroſpective calculation. Whoever undertakes to inveſtigate farther the chronology of the Hindoos, will derive great aſſiſtance from a Memoir of Mr. Marſden on that ſubject, in which he has explained the nature of their year and the ſeveral æras in uſe among them, with much ingenuity and preciſion. Philoſ. Tranſact. vol. lxxx. part ii. p. 560.

NOTE LXVIII. p. 258.

In the public buildings of India, we find proofs and monuments of the proficiency of the Brahmins in ſcience, particularly of their attention to aſtronomical obſervation. Their religion enjoins, that the four ſides of a Pagoda ſhould face the four cardinal points. In order to execute this with accuracy, they take a method deſcribed by M. le Gentil, which diſcovers a conſiderable degree of ſcience. He carefully examined the poſition of one of their Pagodas, and found it to be perfectly exact. Voy. tom. i. p. 133. As ſome of their Pagodas are very ancient, they muſt have early attained ſuch a portion of knowledge as was requiſite for placing them properly. On the ceilings of Choultrys, and other ancient edifices, the twelve ſigns of the zodiac are often delineated; and from their reſemblance to thoſe which are now univerſally uſed, it is highly probable that the knowledge of theſe arbitrary ſymbols was derived from the Eaſt. Colonel Call has publiſhed a drawing of the ſigns of the zodiac, which he found on the ceiling of a Choultry at Verdapettah, in the Madura country. Phil.

Tranſact,

Tranſact. vol. lxii. p. 353. I have a drawing of them in my poſſeſſion, differing from his in ſome of the figures, but I cannot ſay in what particular place it was found. Sir Robert Barker deſcribes an obſervatory at Benares, which he viſited A. D. 1772. In it he found inſtruments for aſtronomical obſervation, of very large dimenſions, and conſtructed with great ſkill and ingenuity. Of all theſe he has publiſhed drawings. Phil. Tranſact. vol. lxvii. p. 598. According to traditionary account, this obſervatory was built by the Emperor Akber. The view which Sir Robert took of it was an haſty one. It merits a more attentive inſpection, in order to determine whether it was conſtructed by Akber, or erected in ſome more early period. Sir Robert intimates, that none but Brahmins who underſtood the Sanſkreet, and could conſult the aſtronomical tables written in that language, were capable of calculating eclipſes. P. Tieſſenthaler deſcribes, in a very curſory manner, two obſervatories furniſhed with inſtruments of extraordinary magnitude, at Jepour and Ougein, in the country of Malwa. Bernouilli, tom. i. p. 316. 347. But theſe are modern ſtructures.

Since the firſt edition of the Hiſtorical Diſquiſition was publiſhed, the Souriak Seddantam, or, according to a more correct orthography, the Súrya Siddhánta, on the principles of which I had obſerved that all the Indian aſtronomy is founded, has been diſcovered at Benares by Sir Robert Chambers. He immediately communicated this valuable work to Samuel Davis, Eſq. who has favoured the world with a tranſlation of ſeveral conſiderable extracts from it.

The Súrya Siddhánta is compoſed in the Sanſkreet language, and profeſſes to be a divine revelation, (as

Abul

Abul Fazel had related, Ayeen Akbery, III. p. 8.) communicated to mankind more than two millions of years ago, towards the close of the Sutty or Satya Jogue, the first of the four fabulous ages into which the Hindoo Mythologists divide the period during which they suppose the world to have existed. But when this accompaniment of fiction and extravagance is removed, there is left behind a very rational and elaborate system of astronomical calculation. From this Mr. Davis has selected what relates to the calculation of Eclipses, and has illustrated it with great ingenuity. The manner in which that subject is treated has so close an affinity to the methods formerly brought from India, and of which I have given some account, as to confirm strongly the opinion that the Súrya Siddhánta is the source from which all the others are derived. How far the real date of this work may be ascertained from the rules and tables which it contains, will be more clearly established when a translation of the whole is published. In the mean time it is evident, that what is already known with respect to these rules and tables, is extremely favourable to the hypothesis which ascribes a very high antiquity to the Astronomy of the Brahmins.

The circumstance, perhaps, most worthy of attention, in the Extracts now referred to, is the system of Trigonometry included in the Astronomical rules of the Súrya Siddhánta. Asiat. Research. ii. p. 245. 249. It may be shewn that this system is founded on certain Geometrical Theorems, which, though, modern Mathematicians be well acquainted with, were certainly unknown to Ptolemy and the Greek Geometricians.

It is with pleasure, too, we observe, that Mr. Davis has in his possession several other ancient books of Hindoo

Hindoo aſtronomy, and that there is reaſon to expect from him a tranſlation of the whole Súrya Siddhánta.

It muſt be added, that we alſo learn from the ſecond volume of the Aſiatic Reſearches, that ſome veſtiges of Algebraical calculation have been diſcovered among the Brahmins; particularly Rules for the ſolution of certain Arithmetical queſtions, with which it would ſeem that nothing but Algebra could have furniſhed them. Aſiat. Reſearch. ii. p. 468. note, 487. 495.

My friend, Mr. Profeſſor Playfair, has examined that Extract from the Súrya Siddhánta, which gives an account of the ancient Hindoo Syſtem of Trigonometry, and has diſcovered the principles on which it is founded. It is with pleaſure I announce, that the reſult of this examination will be communicated ſoon to the Public, and will afford an additional proof of the extraordinary progreſs which the natives of India had early made in the moſt abſtruſe ſciences.

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